AN

ESSAY

ON

THE BEST MEANS OF CIVILISING THE SUBJECTS

OF THE

BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA,

AND OF DIFFUSING

THE LIGHT OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

THROUGHOUT THE EASTERN WORLD;

TO WHICH THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW ADJUDGED

DR BUCHANAN'S PRIZE.

BY

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I.

ONE HUNDRED POUNDS for an ENGLISH PROSE DISSERTATION,

" *On the best Means of civilising the Subjects of the British Empire in India; and of diffusing the Light of the Christian Religion throughout the Eastern World.*"

II.

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" *Collegium Bengalense.*"

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TWENTY-FIVE POUNDS for a GREEK ODE on the following subject:

" ΓΕΝΕΣΘΩ ΦΩΣ."

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ESSAY

ON THE

CIVILISATION OF INDIA, &c.

To a contemplative mind, no country on earth will appear to exhibit features of peculiarity more striking than Hindostan. Those vast ranges of lofty mountains which environ it on three sides; the majestic sweep of its principal rivers, and the extensive fertility which they diffuse in their course; the variety and excellence of its productions, of nature and of art; the mild character of its inhabitants; the peculiar structure of society and of manners, by which they are distinguished; the antiquity of its annals; and the revolutions of its history, have all concurred to render Hindostan, from age to age, most interesting to foreigners.

Singular attractions of India.

General consequences

And, from ancient times, no other region has more powerfully attracted the researches of the philosopher, the enterprise of the soldier, or the adventurous spirit of the merchant.

in respect of science,

That the light of science, following the path of the sun, has all along shone from east to west, is a remark which the general history of literature suggests *. Nor can there be a doubt, that some rays of the philosophy of India, had, at an early period, illuminated the schools of Egypt and of Greece †. The sages of these schools, it is well known, were accustomed to travel eastward in quest of knowledge; and, from the similarity of some of their tenets, particularly of their famed transmigration, we might be led to presume that, in the course of their inquiries, they had profited, either directly or circuitously, by the wisdom of the Brahmans. But we are struck with extreme surprise at some recent discoveries. Who is not astonished when he first reads, that the rules of that famous system of logic, which for ages maintained a sovereign ascendancy in all the seminaries of Europe, and of which Aristotle had been deemed the sole inventor, were known long before in India; and that, accord-

* Vide Note A.

† Jones's Works, vol. i. pp. 275, 276.

ing to a tradition prevalent in that country, Callisthenes, the nephew of the Grecian philosopher, having accompanied Alexander the Great in his invasion of Hindostan, had transmitted this method of reasoning to his uncle*? And is not our wonder heightened, our interest in this singular people increased, when we learn further, that the outlines of the Copernican system of astronomy, together with some of the leading principles of the Newtonian philosophy, and the abstruse speculations of arithmetic and algebra, had been taught in Hindostan, long before they were discovered in Europe†?

"Asia" (says the celebrated Montesquieu) "has been thirteen times conquered." In these calamitous enterprises Hindostan has deeply shared. What is singular, every invader of this unfortunate country has been successful. Seldom has a race of native princes, in the later ages, occupied the throne of India. Without having recourse to an era prior to the commencement of authentic history in Europe, we learn from the annals of classical antiquity, that the Macedonian conqueror, having penetrated into this remote region, with the design of annexing it permanently to

of conquest,

* Asiatic Researches, vol. iv. p. 172. 2d edition.

† Jones's Works, vol. i. pp. 170, 171, 172.

his ample dominions, had established an empire there, which subsisted for a considerable period after his death. To this foreign yoke others have closely succeeded. For, fertile in soil and genial in climate, inhabited by a gentle and unwarlike race, this country has at once strongly attracted the desire, and readily submitted to the arms, of those who sought either for accession of territory or increase of wealth.

and of commerce.

But Hindostan has been chiefly interesting as a scene of commerce. From a remote antiquity, the attention of mercantile nations has been directed to this envied region; and its trade has invariably enriched those who were so fortunate as to share, or to engross it. No other country, at least none equally distant, was so anxiously explored, or so industriously frequented, by the celebrated commercial nations of former times. It was visited by the Phenicians and Egyptians, even before the days of Solomon. There is some reason to suppose, that the fleets of this magnificent prince, fitted out in the ports of the Red Sea, resorted to the shores of India. And, though this conjecture were allowed to be satisfactorily disproved, yet it is certain that, since his time, the staples of this country have continued to be in high request among the polished nations of the western parts of the world; and that the command of this cele-

brated mart has been eagerly seized, and guarded with jealousy, by the Greeks, the Romans, the Turks, the Venetians, the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the English, in succession.

British settlements.

Our countrymen were among the last who obtained settlements in Hindostan. During the late and the preceding century, a company of British merchants, actuated by that spirit of enterprising commerce, which has so long distinguished the inhabitants of this island, sought and obtained trading stations, first on the coast of Coromandel, and then on the banks of the Ganges. Their first object was traffic, not conquest: but circumstances, in the natural course of things, soon arose to embroil them with the natives; and the successful issue of these contests opened their minds to new views of aggrandisement. Still retaining the name and appearance of a commercial company, they became in fact a great council of proprietors, presiding over the affairs of a vast domain, conducting military enterprises on a large scale, and acquiring, from time to time, as the result of these new adventures, an immense accession of territory. The world saw a singular and a splendid spectacle. In the history of no age or nation has it happened, that a range of country so vast, so rich, and so populous, became the pri-

vate property of a company of merchants. Subjects alone in one quarter of the world, and undistinguished beyond the ordinary classes of trading men; they were lords of extensive tracks of land in another. Known here only as merchants, there they were venerated as monarchs of more millions than the British empire contained *. At length, from motives of policy and of prudence, parliament interfered; the concerns of the East India company were taken under the protection and controul of the state; and Hindostan may now be viewed as a grand appendage to the empire of a sovereign, whose ample dominions stretch themselves in every quarter of the globe, and under every variety of climate.

Act of incorporation.

Proposed investigation recommended by

For others it may be enough to have conquered and to possess; but to Britons it belongs, with characteristic magnanimity, to inquire how they may improve and bless the vanquished. When Cyrus conquered Lydia, forgetful at once of his wonted generosity, and of the true interests of his empire, he compelled his new subjects to practise only mean and infamous professions; doubtless that he might

* Vide Note B.

enervate their minds, and degrade them in the eyes of the Persians. Others have adopted the same sinistrous art*. But it is for an humane and enlightened government to rise to higher and more correct views of policy; to adopt nobler measures; and, by attempting to ameliorate the condition and exalt the character of those whom the fortune of war has thrown under their protection, to lessen the evils of conquest, to secure the grateful attachment of their subjects, and to set an example of magnanimity to the world. It is for such a government to extend over conquered provinces, not the deadly gloom of the yew, but the reviving shadow of the banyan.

the genius of Britons,

Not only consonant to the native feelings and liberal policy of a great and generous people, the attempt proposed is necessary for the vindication of our national character. At this moment, loud are the invectives which envy, or hostility, have made to resound throughout Europe. We are stigmatised as an horde of merchants, who, instigated only by base thirst of gain, fatten on the spoils of pillaged provinces: visit but to rob, and conquer only to oppress. Impatient of our maritime superiority and growing empire, the

our regard for the character

* Puff. Univ. History. Dionysius Hal. lib. 7.

attributes of Carthage and of Rome, the insatiable ambition of the one and the mercantile arrogance of the other, are unceasingly ascribed to us. Nor is it uncommon, with invidious triumph, to speak of provinces depopulated; of thousands enslaved, or slaughtered, or starved; of the tears of Africa*, and the groans of India. In tragic style they tell, how our countrymen

> Ravaged kingdoms, and laid empires waste,
> And, in a cruel wantonness of power,
> Thinn'd states of half their people, and gave up
> The rest to want†.

and safety of our country.

Happy for us, were these invectives altogether unfounded. That, as far as concerns Hindostan, they are exaggerated, we must indeed assert; that examples of cruelty and peculation in India are becoming, under a wise and vigilant administration, every day more infrequent, we rejoice in believing; but that they have been unexampled, and that the charge has no grounds whereon to rest in relation to former times, the fondest lover of his country, the most partial admirer of the character of Britons, dare not affirm. "The Asiatic conquerors," (exclaimed an eloquent orator in par-

* Vide Note C. † Blair's Grave.

liament,) "had soon abated of their ferocity, and the short life of man had been sufficient to repair the waste they had occasioned. But with the English the case was entirely different. Their conquests were still in the same state they had been in twenty years ago. They had no more society with the people, than if they still resided in England; but, with the view of making fortunes, rolled in, one after another, wave after wave, so that there was nothing before the eyes of the natives, but an endless flight of birds of prey and passage, with appetites continually renewing for a food that was continually wasting. With us there were no retributory superstitions, by which a foundation of charity compensated for ages to the poor, for the injustice and rapine of a day. With us no pride erected stately monuments, which repaired the mischiefs pride had occasioned, and adorned a country out of its own spoils. England had erected no churches, no hospitals, no palaces, no schools (the trifling foundation at Calcutta excepted): England had built no bridges, made no highways, cut no navigations, dug no reservoirs. Every other conqueror, of every other description, had left some monument of state or of beneficence behind him; but were we to be driven out of India this day, nothing would remain to tell that it had been pos-

sessed, during the inglorious period of our dominion, by any thing better than the ouran outang or the tiger *." These representations are doubtless highly coloured; but the deliberate resolutions of the House of Commons shew that they were not entirely unjust. If so, it becomes us to beware, and to consider how we may retrieve the national character, and compensate to an inoffensive people these acknowledged injuries. If Britons have stained the British name by acts of wanton cruelty and oppression, since the day of vengeance, if not averted by the timely interposition of a humane and generous policy, will come; measures of redress, such as an inquiry of the kind we are entering upon might suggest, can alone exempt us from that awful retribution, which is thus prophetically denounced by an impassioned writer;

Did peace descend, to triumph and to save,
When free-born Britons cross'd the Indian wave?
Ah no!
  But, hark! as bow'd to earth the Bramin kneels,
From heav'nly climes propitious thunder peals!
Of India's fate her guardian spirits tell,
Prophetic murmurs breathing on the shell,

* Burke's speech on Fox's India bill.

And solemn sounds, that awe the listening mind,
Roll on the azure paths of every wind.—
He comes! dread Brama shakes the sunless sky,
With murmuring wrath, and thunders from on high.
Heaven's fiery horse, beneath his warrior form,
Paws the light clouds, and gallops on the storm.
Wide waves his flickering sword, his bright arms glow
Like summer suns, and light the world below.
Earth and her trembling isles in ocean's bed
Are shook, and nature rocks beneath his tread.
To pour redress on India's injured realm,
The oppressor to dethrone, the proud to whelm;
To chace destruction from her plunder'd shore,
With art and arms that triumph'd once before,
The tenth Avater comes*!

Additional motives.

Other considerations urge the proposed investigation. The honour, the interests, and the security of the British empire are deeply involved. By the act of incorporation the vanquished Hindoos have a constitutional right to the privileges of British subjects, and to all those benefits, consistent with their character and condition, which that union can impart. Besides, the importance of Hindostan to the security of the empire is incalculably great. Recollecting, indeed, how Britain has not only survived the separation of her American colonies, but flourished since that period,

Rights of our new subjects.

Disastrous consequences of the loss of Hindostan.

* Campbell's Pleasures of Hope, pp. 42. 44, 45.

by her own internal energies and the goodness of Providence, more than ever, we cannot presume to assert with some, that the overthrow of our empire in Hindostan would involve the destruction of the parent state. But we may venture to aver, that such a catastrophe would tarnish the lustre of the British crown; and, considering how extensively and intimately the interests of this great colonial possession are interwoven with those of the mother country, that it would shake, if it did not subvert, the government. The threat, so often held out by our enemies, of conquering Britain in India, shews of what importance they deem Hindostan to us, and how powerfully its loss would operate, as they apprehend, in paralising our exertions. While we may defy their menaces, let us not disregard the consequence of such an event. The amputation of a limb may not immediately affect the vitals of the constitution, but it necessarily puts the subsequent health, existence, and efficiency of the whole system to a perilous trial. And, if the analogy be in this instance exact, should not every measure of a wise and humane policy be adopted, to prevent a dismemberment of the empire, which may prove fatal, must prove hurtful? Let us also reflect upon the extreme distance of Hindostan from the body of the empire. If we except one of our fo-

Of importance to its defence.

reign settlements which is inconsiderable, India is the most remote, as it is by far the most important dependency of the crown of Great Britain. Lying 15,000 miles east, more than half of the globe must be crossed ere supplies from us can be conveyed to its distant shores. Such, likewise, is the rapidity of Asiatic conquest, that the country might be lost before even the news of invasion could reach the chief seat of government. Shall we then confide its safety to our succours? Must we not look for its best defence to the internal resources of that country itself; to the number, the attachment, the increasing energies of its inhabitants? And how can these resources be so powerfully augmented, as by hastening to conciliate the affections of the natives, and promote their best interests by every plan which wisdom, or goodness can devise and execute?

Farther and higher arguments.

This subject has relations even of higher interest, to which we may appeal. Feelings of an enlarged philanthropy, as well as views of a wise policy; the impulses of a liberal philosophy, not less than the refutation of an invidious spirit of detraction; the solemn sanctions and the glorious advantages of our holy religion*, concur with the genero-

* Vide note D.

sity of the British spirit, the honours of the British name, and the security of the British empire, to prompt this inquiry into the means of civilising and enlightening Hindostan and the East. Few objects can be conceived more noble than those which it presents. Of all speculations, such as tend to ameliorate the condition, and exalt the character of mankind, are the most interesting and important *. And, according to every just estimate, these must appear to rise in proportion to the extent and excellence of the objects they embrace. How grand, how inviting, then, that investigation, which includes at once the temporal and eternal interests of a large portion of mankind! which may contribute to exalt human nature, where it is greatly debased by superstition and slavery; to rescue many millions of our race from a most abject state of civil, intellectual, moral, and religious degradation; and to bless them with an increase of the comforts of life, with a participation of the liberties and laws of Britons, and, above all, with the knowledge of the "word of life," and the enjoyment of the blessings of salvation.

Who, then, adverting to the importance of this investiga-

* Note E.

tion in its various references, is not disposed to ask ardently with the benevolent Cowper,

> Is India free? And does she wear her plum'd
> And jewell'd turban with a smile of peace?
> Or do we grind her still*?

And what consideration is there, most interesting to us as men, as Britons, as Christians, which does not stimulate us to inquire, What are the best means of civilising the subjects of the British empire in India; and of diffusing the light of the Christian religion throughout the eastern world?

Division of the subject,

This inquiry obviously divides itself into two parts: First, What are the best means of civilising the subjects of the British empire in India? and, Secondly, How may the light of the gospel be diffused throughout the eastern world?

and arrangement.

These parts of the inquiry are intimately connected. The one is essentially necessary to promote, or to perfect the other. Without civilisation, Christianity could not be so successfully propagated; and without the influence of Christianity, civilisation cannot be carried to its utmost height.

* Task, book iv.

They are also arranged in an ascending order. The inquiry concerning the means of civilising the Hindoos is antecedent in idea, as well as inferior in excellence, to the other; and, accordingly, from the consideration of the former, we shall be naturally led up to the investigation of the latter, which will carry our views forward to the last and best state of our world and of our race, when, according to the intimation of holy writ, the " whole earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord."

PART I.

OF THE BEST MEANS OF CIVILISING THE SUBJECTS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA.

Civilisation, being a complex term, is liable to be used in a vague sense; and, that we may hold a precise point in view, it will be proper, before we proceed farther in our inquiry, that we determine its meaning. In popular use, it denotes that humanity gentleness and complaisance, which, as contrasted with the cruelty rudeness and ferocity of the savage state, usually distinguish mankind in an advanced stage of society. No nation, on the face of the earth, are, in this sense, more civilised than the Hindoos; for, though several districts of India be infested by hordes of robbers, and the people in general, by reason of their almost total

want of clothing, may, to an European eye, have the appearance of barbarians; yet their national temper and manners, upon the whole, are exemplarily mild, inoffensive, and obliging.

Present signification determined.

The term then, it is presumed, is, in this discussion, to be taken in its philosophical acceptation, denoting the improvement of man, considered as a member of human society, a subject of human government. It supposes him to enjoy the full benefit of those political arrangements, of which his circumstances will admit; and, of course, to possess all that happiness of condition, and refinement of manners, and excellence of character, which, in his situation, he may attain. In this reference the prescribed subject becomes a question of the most interesting moment. How that placid people, whose condition has been hitherto so depressed, may be raised, in the scale of nations and in the lot of humanity, as high in all respects as the advantages of their situation, improved by British talent and influence, will admit, seems to be the spirit and object of the proposed inquiry.

Distinctions on this subject.

Civilisation is either absolute or comparative. By absolute civilisation we understand the utmost improvement, of which mankind, in their social state, are susceptible. This

is that perfectibility of human nature, by the operation of civil government, about which the philosophers and politicians of a neighbouring nation spoke so highly, concerning which they formed theories so beautiful, and the prospect of which they entertained with expectations so sanguine; but of which that people have since set an example so inadequate, as to convince us that there is a certain corruption in human nature, a certain fatality in human affairs, which forbid the hope that this captivating prospect will soon be realised, or the object be ever attained solely by such means. The pleasing dream is dispelled. A cloud has been substituted, and embraced instead of a goddess. Comparative civilisation is all that has hitherto been accomplished; all, it should seem, that we can ever reasonably hope to effectuate by the wisest legislative provisions alone. But even this, though not so splendid in theory, presents in fact, an object sufficiently magnificent and interesting to excite and to reward our researches. There is no nation on earth who have attained, in all respects, that height of improvement which they might reach; none, whose condition and character might not be greatly ameliorated by a wise comparison of the circumstance of other states, and a prudent adoption of whatever should appear, upon due con-

sideration, to be of superior excellence in their schemes of policy. Thus civilisation in all might be progressive; though it should never become absolutely perfect. Mankind might still be ascending in this path of true glory; although in their civil state, they should never reach the highest point of improvement.

In attempting to promote this progress, two extremes are to be avoided. There appears on either hand a fatal rock, which it behoves the political navigator to shun with steady aim. On the one side, by grasping at too much we might lose the comfort, if not the possession, of present privilege: by holding in view a system of Utopian civilisation, a project of ideal perfection, which could never be realised, we would delude ourselves, and, by discouraging effort, even prevent the attainment of what is within our reach. On the other side, by taking our aim too low, we may not rise to that height of improvement, which, by a juster elevation, might easily have been gained. Nor must any one nation be assumed as a perfect model of civilisation. The state and character of all are mixed. In the most refined we shall detect some remnants of ancient rudeness, or some tendencies to barbarism. Among the most polished nations of Europe, customs, derived from their Gothic ancestors, still

maintain their ascendancy; and symptoms of moral, if not of political declension, are but too apparent.

Application of the remark to our subject.

While, therefore, we avail ourselves to the uttermost, of the suggestions to be derived, by discriminating wisdom, from the experience of past ages, or from the institutions of present times, let us, without either grasping at what is unattainable, or contenting ourselves with servilely copying any existing scheme of policy, inquire how the civilisation of Hindostan may be promoted in the highest practicable degree. The civilisation of a country (as has been already hinted) consists in its security under a good government; in the strength, the activity, the excellence of the social principle; in the spirit of union, of industry, and of enterprise by which its inhabitants are actuated, and the conveniencies and comforts of polished life are widely diffused; and in the enlightened, and virtuous conduct of the various classes of the community. How then, by the arrangements of civil polity, by the exertions of a wise administration, may the greatest proportion of happiness be distributed throughout this vast and populous division of the British empire? How may we raise, to the highest pitch that their genius and circumstances will allow, the excellence of human nature, and the improvement of human society, among our eastern sub-

jects? How may we enable them to enjoy the full benefit of social order, and to fulfil, in the best manner, the grand purposes of the existence of man upon the earth? To the solution of these interesting problems we are to address ourselves.

Passing reference to ancient state.

One circumstance it would be improper not to notice, in our progress. By reason of a revolution, not unexampled indeed in the history of mankind, but attended in this case with circumstances of peculiarity, the civilisation of Hindostan admits of a retrospective consideration. An elegant and well-informed historian * has attempted to prove, by a long and argumentative induction of facts, that "the inhabitants of India were not only more early civilised, but had made greater progress in civilisation than any other people." The reason assigned for this attempt, in the close of that elaborate treatise, is both interesting to our feelings, and intimately connected with the object of this dissertation; while the accuracy of his research, the extent of his information, the correctness of his judgment, and the plausibility of his arguments, entitle his conclusions to a high degree of respect. Yet, the extraordinary refinement in civil po-

* Dr Robertson, App. Hist. Disq.

licy, in laws and judicial proceedings, in useful and elegant arts, in sciences, and in religious institutions, which he ascribes to that people; and, especially, the high antiquity to which he carries up the reference, have induced many to doubt, and some formally to controvert, the truth of his hypothesis. But, without entering into a question, which, in its intrinsic merits is detached from our present inquiry, it may be sufficient for our purpose to observe, that, admitting the fact (which is indisputable) that the Hindoos have been, at some former period, more highly civilised than they are at present, it is evident they must be a nation susceptible of farther improvement than they now exhibit. Besides, as it is more difficult to restore suspended animation, or reinvigorate a decayed constitution, than to preserve the health and augment the strength of a system which is unimpaired, so, to recal a nation in a retrograde state, to the career of improvement; to renovate a degenerated society; to inspire new life into a languishing people, we may presume, from analogy, must be an attempt peculiarly arduous. Here, then, is an enterprise, which requires the deepest consideration; an enterprise, which, while it presents an object at once difficult and magnificent, to invite the exertions of genius, also promises to crown success with no common praise. Failure

cannot be dishonourable. The attempt is laudable; and he who sinks in the course, may yet enjoy the consolation of the brave, but too adventurous son of Apollo:

Magnis tamen excidit ausis.

Statistical view of modern Hindostan.

After all, however, the question is not what the Hindoos as a people have been, but what they now are. Their present state is the point from which our inquiries must set out; and it may not be improper, as the ground work of the subsequent plan of improvement, to sketch a brief view of this state, deduced from the most authentic accounts. To do this satisfactorily is no easy task; for, not only are the representations given by different writers on the subject often contradictory, but the same author appears occasionally to be at variance with himself. The following abstract is taken from a comparison of various statements.

Climate.

The author of the "Spirit of Laws" has suggested abundant reason for adverting particularly to climate, in accounting for any system of institutions, or devising any scheme of policy. Too much, indeed, may have been ascribed to this cause: yet, as unquestionably it has a mighty influence in forming the character, and determining the condition of

mankind, he who should overlook a circumstance so important, might be justly accused of neglecting one primary object of consideration. The boundary of Hindostan is irregular; and its geographical position cannot be very accurately marked. Situated betwixt the eighth and the thirty-fifth degree of N. lat. the greater part of it lies within the torrid zone; and it might be expected that the heat would be intense, especially as the face of the country is in general level, extensively covered with wastes and forests, and often rendered damp by the inundations of the rivers. These circumstances, however, are counteracted in a considerable degree by other natural causes; particularly by the lofty ridge of mountains bordering on the cold regions of Tartary, and the sea breezes along the coast. Unfavourable and enervating the climate confessedly is, to European constitutions; but its abundant population shews, that it is not unfriendly to human life, health, or improvement.

Face of the country.

This vast region is intersected, adorned, and fertilised by many noble rivers, which pour themselves into the ocean by several mouths, and are often navigable, for large vessels, high up their streams. Among these the chief are the Indus, the Kistna, the Burrampooter, and the Ganges. The last is superior in magnitude to any river of the ancient con-

tinent; rises to the height of thirty-two feet; overflows its banks to the distance of fifty miles, on either side; runs a course of fourteen hundred miles; receives many large tributary streams, and is called by Hindoos the "King of Rivers."

Population.

Over Hindostan is scattered an immense, but slightly diversified population. Of the numbers which compose this aggregate, no exact estimate has as yet been made. Some compute them at sixty millions; others conceive that they must amount, at the least, to an hundred millions. Of this enumeration an hundred thousand, according to a well-informed writer, are Mahometans; the rest, Hindoos. While different tribes of the latter inhabit this extensive region, there prevails among them a wonderful uniformity of character and manners. In general, the natives are a mild, inoffensive, unambitious race of men: content with little: careless about futurity: attached to ancient usages: and assiduous, without being either active or enterprising. The Mahrattas, however, who inhabit the central parts, and form one of the principal powers in Hindostan, are of a different character; being restless, bold, and warlike. The number of British, compared with the great mass of population, is extremely inconsiderable.

India was formerly united in one splendid empire under the Moguls; but, in latter times, has been parcelled out among a great number of petty princes, who are the objects of similar regard, and possess similar authority, with the chieftains of ancient Europe. Of these principalities, several are now either subject to the British empire, or in alliance with it. The states of chief consideration, that have maintained their independency, are the Mahrattas and the Seiks.

Government, ancient and modern.

The excellence of the soil will easily account for various circumstances in the character and history of its inhabitants. Everywhere good, it is, in many places, particularly to the north and west of Bengal, extremely fruitful. The bowels of the earth yield those precious stones, which have been the special objects of human avarice or vanity, from the beginning; the shores of the sea also contribute to augment such envied productions; and the surface of the land is not less remarkable for the abundance and variety of its crops, than for the readiness with which its increase is yielded. Almost without labour, and with still less art, the ground brings forth plentifully.

Soil, and its productions.

In a country which has been so often conquered, and is still in a state so unsettled; where the husbandman goes

Agriculture.

forth to the field armed, and is uncertain whether he may reap what he has sown, or what exactions may be made upon him; as no encouragement is given to exertion, so, we might presume, little progress will have been made in the first and most necessary of all human occupations. This is the fact. Nothing can be more imperfect than the state of agriculture throughout Hindostan: nothing more rude and inefficient than the implements used by the husbandman: nothing more aukward and unskilful than his modes of cultivation.

Useful arts.

Husbandry, being in a state so rude, the common arts of life, which are in a great measure dependent upon it, must be equally defective. And, amid some magnificent monuments of the architecture of past ages, the huts of the present race are miserable indeed: nor can any contrast be more striking than that which their hovels, scattered amid the ruins of cities once splendid, frequently exhibit. And, if they have attained excellence in any of the other arts, as in weaving and dyeing, their superiority arises, not from greater skill, but from natural advantages.

Though few countries in the world possess greater facilities, and none more abundant materials for commerce, yet no people have hitherto availed themselves less of such en-

viable advantages. Foreign trade is carried on exclusively by strangers; and, of internal, there is little beyond what their mutual wants necessarily require. Even this little is transacted often in a way the most aukward and tedious, by barter, or the use of Cowrie shells.

Elegant arts.

Whatever progress the Indians may have formerly made in the culture of some of the fine arts, (which appears from authentic documents to have been considerable) they are at present as unskilful in these, as in others of a less dignified character. The same remark may be extended to their proficiency in those sciences, which enlighten the minds, and polish the manners of mankind. Their study of astronomy has degenerated into a contemptible, drivelling astrology. The principles, upon which eclipses were anciently computed, are now unknown; the tables and the rules alone remain. All the learning of the times consists in the knowledge of those books, which contain the mysteries of their religion, the precepts of their morality, the institutes of their legislation; and this is confined to one order of the community, the Bramins; and, among them, to one class, denominated Pundits.

Sciences.

Seminaries.

These sacred repositories of science are written in the Shanscrit, a language which has not been spoken for ages

in Bengal, and is known only to a few of the native Literati, and a smaller number of our Countrymen, whom they have at length condescended to instruct in this venerated dialect. Thus, to almost all, this source of information the most envied, is " a spring shut up, and a fountain sealed." To compensate, however, in some measure, for this disadvantage, the living languages are comparatively few; and Persian (like Greek in ancient, and Latin in more modern times,) is very generally spoken and understood. Schools are scattered in different places of the country, but sparingly; and the education is equally scanty. The simple pupils are placed on an open plat around their teacher, who instructs them by draughts, on the sand, on coloured boards, or on leaves of trees, at once to read and to write. The sum and object of their attainments, is to keep accounts, that they may become clerks or factors to Europeans. Of universities they have only three. The most celebrated of these is Benares *, which has been, from time immemorial, the Athens of India, the residence of the most learned Bramins, and the first seat of science. But he who should visit this place, with the hope of contemplating learning in her " mag-

* The other two are Tricur and Cangiburam.

nificent abode," must be greatly disappointed, since he would behold these sublime sophists "slumbering," as a lively writer expresses it, "in equal ease and voluptuousness."

Morals.

When the ministers of religion and the teachers of science exhibit such an example, we may easily conjecture the state of illumination and of virtue among the great body of the people. The Hindoos, though a mild and polished, are yet, intellectually considered, a very uninformed race. Abstemious, because the restraints of their religion, and their extreme poverty, impose temperance; strangers to that ferocity of manners, which marks nations less gentle; they have yet no idea of a morality flowing from the heart, enlightened by principle, and directed to high and pure ends. Many practices, altogether incompatible with personal sanctity, are almost universally indulged. Intoxication, by the use of opium, is not rare: fraud, theft, adultery, perjury, and murder, are common crimes.

Legislation.

The manners of a people at once give to the laws their character, and receive from them in return a powerful bias. The Hindoos being a mild, upon the whole a temperate, and a humane people, it was to be expected that their laws would partake of these qualities; and, accordingly, an high

encomium has been bestowed, by able judges, upon the jurisprudence of India. Notwithstanding, their code is by no means perfect; and since, while the country has undergone great changes, this system of legislation still retains its ancient references; since, above all, it establishes that unnatural distribution of society, which has existed, in some other countries, but survives in India alone, it admits of correction and addition, both in relation to general schemes of policy, and to particular details.

Casts.

Of the Hindoo legislation the most prominent peculiarity is that division of the community into Casts, to which we have just adverted. The whole population is distributed, by this arrangement, into four general classes, besides above eighty subdivisions. Of these the first class consists of the *Bramins*, who are the ministers of religion, the votaries of science, the teachers of youth. To the second, called *Chehteree*, are entrusted the government and defence of the state; so that they are its hereditary magistrates and soldiers. Husbandmen and merchants compose the third, denominated *Bice* or *Bannians*. And into the fourth are thrown all the inferior orders of society, artisans, labourers, and servants, under the designation of *Sooder*. Besides these original and superior ranks of society, there are two adventi-

tious or infamous casts. The one is called *Burrun Sunker*, consisting of all those who have sprung from the prohibited intermarriages, or other illicit intercourse, of the members of the primary classes; and the other, denominated *Pariars* or *Chandalahs*, is composed of all those who, by their own crimes, or those of their forefathers, have forfeited cast. To these we may add a seventh cast or class, created by the connection of Europeans with Hindoos or Mahometans, and formed of their offspring. This last, secluded alike from the privileges of the British and the society of the natives, more formed by nature for enduring the climate than the former, and better fitted for military enterprise than the latter, seem destined to make, in some future period, a conspicuous figure, and act a distinguished part, on the theatre of India. The two preceding classes are the most miserable and degraded of mankind; for the forfeiture of cast is the loss of all respectability and comfort, and, once lost, the privilege is irrecoverable: no wealth, no influence can procure its restoration *. Even betwixt the four first orders, which are accounted honourable, there is drawn a line of distinction so complete, that no individual can, on any account, quit his own cast, and enter into another; or marry a person of a

* Vide note F.

different class; or even (except at one religious solemnity) hold any intimate intercourse, particularly in eating drinking and smoking, with his countrymen thus separated from his society*. At the same time, although one of an inferior rank may not assume the privileges, or exercise the functions of another belonging to a superior cast, yet the latter may, in certain instances, descend to the station, and execute the duties of the former.—This distribution of society justly excites our astonishment. Its origin is inexplicable.

History of this singular institution.

That one order of men should be ambitious of acquiring, and of establishing a selfish ascendancy, is not wonderful; but that the other classes of the community should have been induced to submit to such arrogant claims, and to concur in enacting laws confirming the usurpation of the few, and degrading, not only themselves, but their posterity for ever, is utterly unaccountable. Its permanency is not less surprising than its origin. In other countries we see remote tendencies to such a distribution; but no distinction of ranks, so complete and so authoritative, anywhere exists: and although in ancient Egypt a similar classification was once established, yet it has been abolished for ages. The Hindoo constitution, however, derived from a period of

* Vide Note G.

which there is no account*, and, unbroken by the violence of Tartar conquest, unshaken by the fanaticism of Mahometan zeal, unimpaired by all the vicissitudes of their history and revolutions of their government, subsists a singular monument of the stability of an order of things, at once unnatural, unjust, and impolitic.

British empire.

In all the above circumstances the British empire in India, and its inhabitants, partake. It contains a surface of vast extent; stretching, according to the latest accounts, with the addition of our recent conquests, from Delhi to Cuttach, a thousand miles south; westward, as far as Agra; and, upon the east, to Silhet, only twelve days journey from the borders of Yunan in China. Augmenting still, in the career of victory; embracing, in alliance or subjection, the greater part of the peninsula, it has attained a decided preponderance in the East, and exhibits a commercial empire, which, whether you regard its extent, its opulence, the slender means by which it was acquired,

Extent and magnitude.

* Vide Note H.

or the lustre of military exploit by which the history of its acquisition has been distinguished, is of the first consideration in the annals of human affairs, or the schemes of modern policy.

Population.

The population of this magnificent empire has never been exactly ascertained, and, of course, is variously estimated. A well-informed writer * computed it before the late conquests at thirty millions; and, if some † have raised, and others ‡ lowered the computation, this variation may serve to confirm his conjecture. How many the newly-acquired territories may contain, cannot be determined. Besides subjects, there are in Hindostan about thirty thousand servants of the Company, civil and military.

Government.

This vast and populous territorial acquisition is under the immediate jurisdiction of three presidencies, viz. Bengal, Madras, and Bombay. Each of these consists of a Governor and Council, composed of a small number of the Company's servants. The government of Fort William in Bengal is the chief of the three; but the other two act independently, unless when such an emergency arises as may compel the supreme power to assume its predominant rights,

* Sir William Jones. † Dr Tennant rates them at fifty millions.

‡ Pinkerton estimates them at twelve or fourteen millions.

to call for the assistance, and to regulate the exertions of the other two. At home, the affairs of the Company are managed by a Board of Directors, chosen, from time to time, by the holders of stock. The proceedings of this original court are now superintended by another and higher judicature, a committee of his Majesty's ministers and privy council, under the title of a "Board of Controul." It is also provided, that an exact account of the transactions of both, and of the affairs of the Company, shall be annually laid before parliament for their review.

Condition of subjects.

By a wise and liberal policy, the natives have been left to enjoy the benefit of their own institutions and laws; subject, however, to such modifications and arrangements, civil and military, as their internal security, and the nature of their relations to neighbouring powers may require. Among British institutions two are of principal consideration. The one is a supreme court of justice, holding its sittings at Calcutta, and consisting of a president and three subordinate judges, who try the British, the Hindoos, and the Mahometans, severally, by their own laws. The university of Bengal, a still more recent erection, is the other. A magnificent monument of the taste and liberality of the present government of India; may it also prove, for many an age,

the source of illumination, scientific and evangelical, to the interesting natives of that remote region!

Revenue.

The support of those establishments of various kinds, which are requisite for the security of our interests, or the honour of the British name, in a country where magnificence is the order of the day, must necessarily be very expensive. For this, however, the resources of the country seem fully adequate. According to a writer * who had the best opportunities of correct information, the revenues of the Mogul empire amounted to thirty-six millions sterling; and, as the Company now occupy at least one-third of the whole, their annual receipts cannot be less than twelve millions. They arise partly from territorial imposts; partly from the occasional contributions and assessments of tributary or vanquished states; and partly from the emoluments of trade in Asia or in Europe. Of the exact amount, which must necessarily be liable to many contingencies, various estimates have been formed. It must unquestionably be ample; and, with due management, cannot fail to increase. Yet, ample as it is, the expenditure of the Company has hitherto exceeded their income, and compelled them to adopt the funding system, and borrow from the government of the

* Abu Fazel, minister of the celebrated Akber, in his Ayeen Acbery.

mother country. But the emergencies which produced these incumbrances, have been incidental and extraordinary; the recent acquisition of territory has been vast; the increase of revenue (amounting, it is conjectured, to not less than two millions of pagodas) has been proportionably great; and there is every reason to hope, that a short period of tranquillity will enable the Company, not only to discharge their arrears, but to acquire immense wealth. An injudicious passion for territorial acquisition can alone prevent this desirable result; and should we fail, through such impolitic ambition, to reap the benefit of our Indian possessions, we shall exhibit the only instance upon record, of a nation impoverished by its connection with this envied country, and by engrossing a commerce the most lucrative of which any people, ancient or modern, have been so fortunate as to obtain the entire command.

Such is the brief account which it seemed expedient to premise of the present state of India: wholly unnecessary, the author is aware, for the information of that learned Tribunal to whose decision the merits of this Essay are sub-

mitted, but requisite, he presumes, to give a complete view of the subject as a whole, and to indicate the references of the subsequent hints.

The above sketch may suggest several important deductions; and, among others, three, intimately connected with the object of this inquiry.

Conclusions from the preceding abstract.

Of these the first is, That, "comparing the present condition of the Hindoos with the idea that was formerly given of civilisation, it must be obvious, that they have not attained, in various respects, that degree of improvement, to which, under a wise administration, they might rise." Far removed from the savage state; gentle and amiable in their manners; excelling in some arts, they are more refined than many other tribes of our race; but they are also in many things far inferior to others. Their system of legislation, it has been seen, is defective or erroneous in several views; some of the most necessary arts of life are in a state very rude; in most of the elegant arts their proficiency is small; the cultivation of the sciences is confined to one class of the community, is locked up in a dead language, and consists in studying the records of their own nation; and their morals are by no means perfect, either in principle or in practice. Much, in short, we may infer, may yet be added to their

political dignity, much to their social order, much to their commercial advantages, much to their domestic comfort and happiness, and much to their moral and intellectual improvement.

Insecurity of empire.

It may also appear, that at present our empire in India stands on a very precarious footing. This inference is deducible from various considerations. The conquered country is extremely extensive; and our settlements, intended from the beginning only as commercial depots, and therefore situated on the coast, are not fitted by their position to command the inland districts. The number of disaffected or faithless tribes, on our long and open frontier, also affords to our enemies in Europe an easy opportunity of intriguing with the natives, and, by their means, of invading our territories. The vast disproportion betwixt the small aggregate of our forces and the immense population of the country, may suggest too much reason for apprehension concerning the event of such conflicts in some future warfare. Be it so that our troops are far superior in military skill and prowess to the undisciplined and unwarlike natives; that the battle of Plassey, which established us in the sovereignty of Bengal, and struck the country powers with the terror of the British name, was gained by the for-

midable array of only nine hundred European soldiers; and that other victories, equally brilliant and favourable to the extension of our interests in India, have of late been obtained by inconsiderable detachments of British forces over almost countless hosts even of Mahrattas. On the other hand, however, we ought not to forget that fortune is fickle, and the fate of war may change: that our troops must necessarily be worn out by the fatigue of incessant enterprise, and the inhospitality of the climate: that, with all the advantages of superior discipline and valour, they may be overwhelmed, in some future engagement, by the very pressure of numbers, and the lassitude which a torrid sky creates: that the natives, as usually happens, may, in the progress of warfare, imbibe somewhat of the spirit, and acquire the skill and steadiness of our military: that, in fact, the Sepoys in our service are known to make excellent soldiers, when trained and led on by British officers: and that there is good ground to fear, that, in some after period, our subjects may be incited to rebellion, or assisted in their insurrection, by hostile officers and auxiliaries from Europe, conducted to Hindostan by land, or conveyed thither by sea. Thus, flourishing as are the affairs of the Company at present, splendid as are the prospects of aggrandisement now

rising to view, if they depend upon force alone for maintaining their empire in India, they may suddenly experience the fate of all other commercial companies, who have acquired territories in this remote region, and, in their turn, at no distant period, be erased from the roll of oriental powers.

Importance of internal union.

The necessity of attaching the natives to us by a sense of their own interests and happiness, if we would retain a permanent ascendancy in India, is the last conclusion suggested by the foregoing sketch, which we shall mention. The dominion of force and of fear, in a country so populous, so extensive, and so remote from the seat of the primary government, there is no reason to presume, from the history of human affairs, will always prevail. To support a military force in that quarter adequate to the permanent subjugation of Hindostan, though it were practicable, would incur an expence for which the funds of the Company, ample as they are, would probably be found ultimately incompetent: to supply the waste of the army there always with natives, would be to increase the danger, in proportion to the extent and duration of the establishment: while, to send recruits from this country, in any due proportion, would at all times be expensive and hazardous, in some circumstances absolutely

impracticable. Besides, although there might be no risk of insurrection among the natives, especially when trained to arms according to the superior mode of British tactics; and although both the funds of the Company and the state of the empire could easily afford the requisite supplies, yet at least equal danger may arise from another quarter. For, reflecting upon the history of the Roman empire, and the motives which operate upon human nature, is there no reason, considering the distance of the scene of action, to apprehend that temptations to throw off allegiance, too strong for some one of the chief servants of the Company to resist, and an army inured to the climate, and too great to be reduced by any force that can be brought to act against them from this country, may, at some future period, prove the most powerful engine for subverting the empire of Britain in India? To ameliorate the condition of the subjects of this empire, to interest the natives themselves in its support, will, in every view, appear to be the most eligible means of upholding it;—the cheapest, as well as the most honourable expedient we can employ, for the preservation of our power in that part of the world. The civilisation of the natives (we repeat it) seems to be the wisest plan of policy which can be adopted by the Company; the most promising method

of establishing their own ascendancy and interests, on a basis not to be shaken.

Obstacles.

In contemplating the means of accomplishing this important object, "the civilisation of the subjects of the British empire in India," it cannot be denied that several circumstances, greatly unpropitious to such an undertaking, present themselves to our consideration.

Magnitude of the empire.

Of these the most obvious is, the immense extent of country which our empire in that quarter embraces. In a small territory much may be done with comparative ease: one person can superintend the execution without difficulty: whatever error may have been committed, will be at once detected and rectified: and the whole force of his talents, of his plans, and, if necessary, of military action, can be brought speedily to bear on any tardy or refractory department. But in a vast empire these advantages cannot be enjoyed. The machine of government becomes cumbrous and unwieldy by its magnitude; its movements are necessarily slow, and liable to a thousand incidental obstructions, which cannot be speedily discovered or removed. The authority and influence of the head are lessened greatly by the distance at which he is viewed. These difficulties and delays, which must occur in quelling and avenging insurrec-

tion, or opposition to public measures, present temptations which, it may be expected, will operate powerfully upon the disaffected.

Rapid succession of rulers.

The greatness of the trust, a climate unfriendly to British constitutions, and the distance of the dependency, render it inexpedient that any one governor should continue long in India. But, amid frequent changes, different views may be expected to occur; different plans of policy or administration will probably be adopted; and these will operate to retard the accomplishment of the grand design.

Unfavourable opinions of our countrymen in India.

It is to be regretted, also, that the greater number of our countrymen in India, whether from habits which are unfavourable to speculations of this kind; or from narrow views of policy; or from degrading ideas of the Hindoo character; or from the obvious folly of the schemes of some visionary projectors; have hitherto been apt to treat with contempt every proposal of improvement as ridiculous or impracticable. Contemplating the strong prejudices of the natives, the stability of their institutions, and the permanency of their manners, they hastily conclude, either that they are incapable of amelioration, or that every attempt which might be made will be ultimately found unavailing. With these views it is not to be expected that they will en-

ter readily into the design; and as the progress must necessarily be slow, they cannot be allured in the beginning (as in some other cases) by the hope of immediate, or stimulated by the attainment of great success.

Internal obstructions.

But those circumstances which are most adverse, arise from the policy, the usages, and the temper of that very people, whose best interests we would seek to promote.

Casts.

The division of the community into casts, strongly opposes itself to all alteration or improvement. This singular institution, I am aware, has not been considered by all as injurious. It has been regarded even with partiality, and represented as favourable to civilisation, by the elegant and reflecting author of the " Disquisition concerning the Knowledge which the Ancients had of India." " Such arbitrary arrangements," says he in his appendix to that work, " of the various members which compose a community, seems, at first view, to be adverse to improvement, either in science or in arts; and, by forming around the different orders of men artificial barriers, which it would be impious to pass, tends to circumscribe the operations of the human mind within a narrower sphere than nature has allotted to them. The object of the first Indian legislators was to employ the most effectual means of providing for the subsistence, the

security, and happiness of all the members of the community over which they presided. And this system, though extremely repugnant to the ideas which we, by being placed in a very different state of society, have formed, will be found, upon attentive inspection, better adapted to attain the end in view, than a careless observer is, on a first view, apt to imagine." From the judgment of such a man we cannot dissent without diffidence: his opinions ought not to be combated without modesty. Yet no name, it is apprehended, can sanction such an institution; and we cannot but suppose, that the venerable divine has been seduced by excess of candour; or by an imposing love of paradox, from which the greatest minds are perhaps least of all exempted; or by overweaning partiality for a favorite subject of study, to become the advocate of a system, which condemns, irretrievably, the largest portion of the community, whatever be the abilities and excellence of individuals, to ignorance and to abasement; which opposes itself to the benevolent designs of the great Creator, and estranges man from man; which places insuperable barriers in the path of talent, of virtue, and of industry, to prevent them from rising to their proper ascendancy; which entails a monopoly of honour, of science, of power, and of piety, upon certain classes of the

community exclusively, not as the reward of superior endowments, or of more sanctified conduct, but as their birthright inheritance, as the capricious allotment of human laws. Than this, what can be conceived more arbitrary and unnatural; more unjust or impolitic? It is even unfriendly to those classes whom it unduly elevates; for it is calculated to engender a certain *esprit du corps*, in its utmost strength, inciting them to divide their interests from those of the community; fostering pride; and operating against that candour which, while it adorns the character, is necessary to promote illumination and moral improvement. With respect to the inferior ranks, as it chains them down to a certain routine of drudgery; so, by withdrawing all the public rewards of diligence and of goodness, it represses exertion. Who would think of instituting a cast of mathematicians? Yet the Hindoo legislation has instituted a class of philosophers. Admitting that "the arrangements of civil government are made not for the few but for the many," does it not deserve notice, that, upon individual genius, the illumination, the improvement, and the happiness of the body of a nation will often depend? and ought not that to be sedulously cherished, which may prove a public blessing? But, absurd and injurious as this distribution of society is,

having originated in the earliest antiquity, and maintained itself unchanged amid all the revolutions of their nation; being incorporated essentially with the constitution of their society; familiarised continually to their view by its effects; forming the complexion of all their manners; associated with all their prejudices; sanctioned by all their religious feelings; recommended by whatever has been wise, or venerable, or pious in their history or mythology, it must be admitted to present an obstacle, the most formidable that can be conceived, to the progressive improvement and elevation of the great body of the people.

Stability of customs.

To it we may impute, in a great measure, that wonderful permanency of Hindoo manners, which may be regarded as another impediment. The descriptions of the remotest classical antiquity may be applied, with equal precision, to the present times. On the costume of society in India, the lapse of ages, and all the revolutions of their history, have made no impression. "The same cast of manners has always prevailed in Hindostan, and is likely still to continue," says the learned historiographer lately quoted. "Neither the ferocious violence, nor the illiberal fanaticism of its Mahometan conquerors, nor the power of its European masters, have effected any considerable alterations." "Except,"

says another elegant historian, " the single circumstance of the pure primeval religion of India, which descended from their patriarchal ancestors, having, in some melancholy instances, degenerated into idolatry, no perceptible vicissitude has taken place among this celebrated people, from the commencement of their empire to this day. Whatever is true of them at one period, is equally true of them at another. The laws of the Medes and Persians were not more unalterable. From age to age, from father to son, through an hundred generations, the same uniformity of manners, and cast of character prevail, inexterminable by the sword, incorruptible by the vices, and unalterable by the example of their conquerors." This circumstance, it must be admitted, is as discouraging as it is extraordinary. Nor can the attempt to alter long-established manners, be accounted less hazardous than difficult. " Nations," as Montesquieu observes, " are more tenacious of their manners than of their laws." They read and hear the one; they feel and see the other. But though the fact, to which we have been adverting in relation to the Hindoos, be unpromising, the case ought not to be accounted desperate. Some slight deviations in dress, and in their household economy, with reference to the seclusion of women from public society, there

is some reason to think have been borrowed from their Mahometan governors. And, since our countrymen have acquired the decided ascendancy, some instances of conformity in the natives to their new masters, in furniture and equipage, have appeared *: nor can there be a doubt, that this spirit of imitation, if it be judiciously fostered by government, will continue to be prompted by several circumstances, and to operate in an increasing degree. Indeed the experiment, how far the manners of this singular people might be changed, has never been fairly made. "Customs ought to be changed by customs †;" but their ferocious tyrants sought to revolutionise them by law and by force. Milder treatment, the influence of other practices in their superiors, and the power of persuasion, have not yet had time fully to operate. Besides, have this neglected people ever enjoyed the means of intellectual illumination, of moral improvement, or even of domestic enjoyment in a suitable degree? After all, however, although the amazing permanency of their manners ought not to be regarded as an insuperable, it may well be accounted a very formidable, obstacle to their political progress.

* Robertson's India, App. note 2. † Montesquieu.

The last circumstance of this sort we shall mention is, "that extreme listlessness of spirit which marks their temper." According to all writers, the *vis inertiæ* seems to be a radical principle of the Hindoo constitution. Mild and effeminate by nature, they are prone to become inactive: patient and unambitious, nothing, except the calls of necessity, or the impressions of fear, will rouse them to strenuous exertion: depressed by the institutions of an unequal policy, they have no generous motives even to laudable emulation: habituated, from age to age, to the state and feelings of a conquered people, the Gentoos have contracted a certain torpor of mind, and a total carelessness about futurity, which are exceedingly unfavourable to every plan of improvement. Unless mankind take interest in those schemes which are formed for their civilisation; unless they co-operate actively in their execution, it were vain to expect their success. It is the running stream, not the stagnant pool, that diffuses fertility and verdure, improves the country, and purifies the atmosphere. But in Hindostan we see only the stagnation of human genius, a state of society perpetually stationary. There is beheld the "waveless calm" of the mind, the still scene of life, a lethargic people listlessly submitting to their lot, under all its painful vicissitudes: a simple race of men,

Indolence of temper.

content to vegetate on the soil of their ancestors, to be as they have been, and do as they have done, without one effort to rise in the scale of nations, or advance in the career of improvement. How insensible must they be to all the ordinary excitements, which arouse mankind, and impel them to action! In vain you speak to them of an increase of the comforts of this life: they have already enough to satisfy their very limited wants or desires, and more would only invite the plunderer. In vain you represent to them the objects of an honourable distinction: these have no attractions for men who have been always precluded from aspiring after an elevation of rank, and are trained from earliest life to acquiesce in their humble condition, as the unalterable decree of heaven. In vain you would allure them by displaying the charms of science, or speaking of the sublime excursions of philosophy ;——

Lo the poor Indian————
His soul proud science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk, or milky way *.

——" Knowledge, to his eyes, her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time, did ne'er unrol,"
The 'numbing cast, with frost, from age to age,
Enchains " the genial current of the soul †."

* Pope. † Gray.

To compensate for these discouraging considerations, there are others, of a nature peculiarly inviting, which the preceding abstract may also suggest, and which ought not to be overlooked.

Facilities.

The inhabitants of Hindostan are greatly removed from the state of barbarism; are settled in fixed abodes; collected into cities; accustomed to regular government; and acquainted, in a considerable measure, with the arts of civilised life. But to improve further those who have already made considerable advances in civilisation, is a work obviously of much greater ease than to refine those who are altogether savage.

Partial refinement.

Their character is extremely mild; their temper submissive to an extreme. They are not, like many other nations, particularly like the Mahometans mingled with them, irascible, turbulent, vengeful. Now, this circumstance suggests the hope, that wise and moderate plans of improvement may be crowned with success, or, should they prove abortive, will not excite insurrection, or produce those disastrous con-

Temper.

sequences, which might be apprehended in almost every other case.

Similarity of laws, &c.

A striking uniformity of institutions and manners prevails throughout the whole of the conquered territories. Thus, while a variety of plans would distract the attention of government, and probably interfere with one another in operation; one general scheme of improvement will suit the extended empire.

Coincidence of languages.

The written language of Hindostan is universally the same: the spoken dialects are few, and easily acquired. Hence the means of communication are greatly facilitated: a circumstance which may be highly conducive to union of plan, as well as to steadiness and security of execution.

History.

Long have the Hindoos been a vanquished people; often have they been united under one head; for ages they have been trained, by a severe discipline, to habits of subordination; and, if their prejudices be not rudely shocked and their ancient policy violently assailed, it does not seem that they will feel or resent, as an injurious innovation, any systematic plan of reform, which may tend slowly to revolutionise even their whole state of society and of manners.

Character and authority of our government.

The dignified position which the British power now holds in the eyes of the world, its commanding attitude among the

states of Hindostan, will cause all its measures to be received with respect; and, if they are (what they ought to be) adapted to the genius and circumstances of the natives, most probably obeyed by them with readiness.

In fine, the present crisis, when the splendid victories lately achieved must have increased the impression of the British name, and heightened those ideas of the skill and prowess of our countrymen, which the Hindoos had been taught to entertain, seems peculiarly favourable for the commencement of this glorious undertaking, and for putting into operation those plans of improvement, which, at any prior period, the natives might have been more apt to resist.

Thus, encouraged by a variety of concurring circumstances, of a permanent or incidental kind, Britons would be wanting to themselves, undutiful to their eastern subjects, and insensible to the highest considerations, if, notwithstanding the obstacles already adverted to, they did not embrace with ardour the very favourable opportunity now offered them by "the Governor among the nations," and, to the utmost of their ability, endeavour to promote the improvement and happiness of so many millions "of their fellow men, inhabiting those Indian territories, which

Providence has thrown into the arms of Britain for their protection and welfare *."

Presumed nature of the plans that are most eligible.

How we may avail ourselves, in the best manner, of this happy crisis, and of our great resources, is a question of the utmost importance. If the author of this Essay has formed to himself a just conception of the subject, the following are the characters of those plans, which suit the circumstances, and ought to be adopted. Sound policy seems to require that they should be practicable, not Utopian; progressive, not precipitate; gentle, not violent; frugal, not expensive; liberal, not selfish or contracted in their spirit; accommodated to present circumstances, and not to any supposeable case which may occur in the course of affairs. Let them be founded not on theory alone, particularly not on visionary speculation; but on just views of human nature, and, if possible, on actual experiment Let them proceed upon the incontrovertible truth, (a law observed throughout all the operations of nature) that great revolutions are to be effectuated only gradually; and that important changes in the government, the manners, the spirit, the views of any society, particularly of a great na-

* Jones's Works, vol. i. p. 150.

tion, are not to be produced instantaneously, and cannot be attempted, except by slow degrees, without the utmost hazard *. Let us not forget, that if violent remedies, when they can be avoided, are never resorted to by prudent and skilful physicians, for effecting any great alteration of the human constitution, analogy will exact from politicians the observance of the same rule, in attempting to accomplish those revolutions in the state, which they may project for the common interest; and that violence may often prevent what gentler measures would have attained. Let it be considered, that plans which are showy, for that very reason, are likely to be less solid: that magnificence is not to be compared with utility: that, abroad, a policy which will require for its support heavy exactions from our foreign subjects, must prejudice them against it, and of course prevent their cordial concurrence: while, at home, the adoption of a splendid and costly system would most probably be resisted, as incompatible with the interests of the Company, unjust to the claims of the mother country, and oppressive to the subjects of the British empire in India. Let us, however, be persuaded, both that schemes of contracted

* Note I.

policy, in an empire so vast, and where so much is to be done, promise least of all to be efficient, because these evils, to which no remedy should be applied, would counteract those operations which might tend to remove others; and that, at any rate, what is selfish and illiberal, cannot comport with the dignity of the British nation, or the true honour of the British character. Let us, in fine, recollect, that we are called upon to legislate not for possible emergencies, but for present circumstances: not to provide for future occurrences, which can indeed be anticipated, yet may never arrive; but to apply remedies to existing evils: not to determine what would be proper, upon supposition that the affairs of the Company were devolving entirely upon the government of this country; but to inquire, by what means the former may, most speedily and effectually, diffuse the blessings of civilisation (in the highest acceptation of the term) through territories which their arms have subdued, which they now claim, must for a considerable period hold, and may for ever retain, as their rightful and magnificent possession.

Transition to means.

On these views the following suggestions are founded.

I.
Governor general.

Much in all cases must depend upon the chief of the empire. And, from time to time, to select and place at the head of affairs in India a person of talents and temper suited to the undertaking, is a measure of the most obvious and essential importance. And he must be a man of no common character. That, in the present state of the world and of India, the station of a chief governor, in that great and remote province of the British dominions, is sufficiently arduous, no reflecting person will doubt. But the adoption of a plan of improvement, such as that country requires, will greatly augment the difficulties of the situation. For, in this case, to all the ordinary cares of government, there will be added the superintendence of a new scheme of policy, which must of necessity have a thousand delicate bearings, be liable to a thousand unforeseen obstructions, and involve the operation of a thousand principles and powers, means and agents, which are not easily formed, or excited, or controuled. He, then, who is qualified to preside over an empire so vast, and, while he watches over the external security of territories so remote, can carry into effect a system of internal reformation so extensive and untried, must, we repeat it, be no mean man. To the talents of a great general he should add those of an enlightened statesman and

His situation,

Character;

great magistrate. With a mind trained to higher views than plans of profitable traffic alone can inspire, with a spirit capable of more daring than they who have not been inured to arms usually imbibe, he will be fitted equally to conduct armies in war, or administer the affairs of government in peace. He ought to possess, in an uncommon degree, those enlarged and accurate views of the science of government, of the philosophy of human nature, of national and local peculiarities, which may enable him to avail himself, in the best manner, of men and measures, to break in upon long-established usages with the least annoyance, and to new-mould a system most artfully contrived, most closely connected, and upheld by innumerable prejudices, without noise and without violence. Mindful of the dignity and generosity appertaining to the character of a British governor, he should also feel a particular interest in that engaging people, over whom he presides. Partaking of the spirit of freedom, and rejoicing in those liberties which are the birthright inheritance of every Briton, he should account it his glory to communicate this invaluable blessing to those placed under his care, as far as their circumstances will admit. His intellect should be commanding and comprehensive. His probity and approved honour should be a security to his consti-

Administration,

tuents, that his powers will not be abused. His abilities and force of character, should be a pledge that, what man can do for the good of the empire, he will accomplish. To others may be left the care of the subordinate arrangements. They may manage the routine of business, and the investments of the Company: they may digest the laws, or dictate judicial decisions: they may attend to the forms of court etiquette, and conduct diplomatic procedure: they may regulate the discipline of the troops, and arrange the details of provincial administration. But he is destined to preside over all; the soul of the system; the potent arm that puts in motion the whole machine of government; the mighty master-mind that illuminates and controuls the whole operations in subserviency to the grand design. His presence, by the efficiency of the means he employs, and the universality of his influence, should seem to be felt everywhere. His hand, by the well-arranged energies of administration, must appear always ready to reward the industrious and the good, to protect the weak, to stimulate the slothful, to fall upon the head of the insurgent and oppressor. And his should be that rare adaptation of character and talent, which will suit circumstances as they arise. For it is not to be forgotten, that whatever abilities may have been display-

and talents.

ed in the government of India, (and these have not been small) the arrangement and execution of plans of improvement so complicated and novel as the circumstances of that great empire demand, will, in all probability, require that new talents and new energies be called forth into action.

II.
Tranquillity.

The external security of the empire is an object of primary importance in itself: and, if not essentially necessary, will be greatly conducive, to the promotion of any scheme of amelioration. It is not amid the agitations of the tempest, but under the serene sky, that the husbandman prosecutes his labours, or scatters the seed of his future harvest. And, without that degree of tranquillity which peace creates, or that confidence which adequate means of defence (under Providence) inspire, projects of internal improvement cannot be prosecuted by the individual, or by the government, with sufficient steadiness and success. Not only does war (though alas! too often necessary) violate the laws of humanity, but also induce a certain ferocity of character, and divert the attention from those arts of industry, from that application to mental and moral improvement, which are essential to civilisation. To provide against this evil, will be

Its necessity and advantages.

a principal object of the policy of a wise and good government. But it is obvious, that, in proportion to the extent of the British empire in Hindostan; to the extreme length of boundary, unprotected by natural barriers, which it presents; and to the number of hostile, powerful, and restless tribes on this open limit, must be the difficulty of maintaining peace, and providing for the public safety. In the present improved state of modern tactics, to dream of securing the latter by a wall of defence, similar to that which defends China from the incursion of the Tartars, were as ridiculous as to environ France with a bound-hedge, or Britain with a breast-work, to defend them from external alarms and invasion. To commit the safety of our empire in India to a chain of military stations, extending the whole length of the exposed frontier, would be an expedient, if not ineffectual, yet extremely precarious and expensive. The attainment of a secure tranquillity, however, must appear an object of the first importance, not only to the stability, but also to the improvement of our empire in the East.

Means of obtaining it.

To what circumstances, then, must we look for the defence and tranquillity of our Asiatic possessions?

That policy, which placed the domains of the East India Company under the protection and controul of the state,

though originally resisted with obstinacy, and at last acceded to with reluctance, must, upon reflection, appear to have been wise and salutary for both parties. On the one hand, a territory so vast, a trade so rich, and in some of its branches interfering with the interests of the mother country, mercantile or manufacturing, held exclusively by any one corporation, must necessarily be an object of jealousy to government, of umbrage, perhaps of injury, to the other commercial interests of the country, and therefore require to be put under a common controul. On the other, a private Company being less respectable in the eyes of foreign nations, and of resources more circumscribed, both more readily invites, and is less able to repel attack, than a great state. But, placed by the incorporating union under the broad shield, and defended by all the energies of the British government, the East India Company assumes a dignified and formidable attitude in the eyes of the world. She is, what Britain is. The whole weight of the empire goes to increase her respectability; the whole resources of the empire go to ascertain the permanence and safety of her possessions. This union, so important to both, and so greatly subservient to the peace and prosperity of Hindostan, ought to be sedulously maintained and strengthened. If ever a

time arrive, when this auspicious association shall be dissolved, by factious intrigue on the one side, or impolitic concession on the other, there can thenceforth be little reason to hope, that a possession so remote, so enviable, and thus separated from its great protector, will remain long either in internal peace, or in subjection to British influence.

Military force.

But the political connection of the territories of the Company with our powerful nation, will not be enough of itself to maintain their tranquillity, or deter the neighbouring tribes from acts of hostility. The immense distance betwixt India and Britain will incessantly allure the envious and restless to invasion; and, without an adequate military establishment, and such arrangements for defence and for avenging aggression as may appear formidable in the eyes of surrounding states, the permanency of our government in India must be very precarious. A respectable standing army, disposed in such places, and in such proportions, as local circumstances, the spirit of the country, the temper and views of contiguous powers, and the purposes of concentration and co-operation may require, seems, at least for the present, essentially necessary, both to the security of the empire, and to the steady prosecution of any plans of polity which may be adopted. And whoever considers the

small number of British forces in India, and compares this with the immense extent of territory, with the vast amount of the population, and the large armies that can be speedily raised and brought into the field by some of the neighbouring powers, will be satisfied, that our military establishment in that quarter would require very considerable augmentation. Besides these scattered cantonments, a considerable disposeable force ought always to be kept about the seat of government, ready to act as emergencies require. This measure has been adopted under other governments, where the proportion betwixt the troops and the territory was very unequal, and seems not only expedient but necessary in the present case.

Conciliation of natives.

This is not all. One of the chief means of security must be derived from the conquered or ceded countries themselves. Domestic disaffection or rebellion is the most powerful allurement to external aggression. But a confederation of states, a close and cordial union and co-operation among the members of the empire, opposes a formidable barrier, a firm and compacted phalanx, not only to predatory incursion, but also to more regular warfare. We speak now, not merely of a political association, which may be often apparent or nominal, and will prove, without the other, faithless

and inefficient; but of an union of affection and of energies. And, with the view of cementing this amicable conjunction, it must be the uniform object of all arrangements, political and military, and of all the executive administrations, not only to awe but to conciliate the natives; to teach them that it is at once their duty and their interest to submit to the reigning powers; and to convert, by a train of benefits, the law of force into the government of friendship. A mild and enlightened, an equitable but energetic system of policy must be pursued: a policy which, while it does not insult their prejudices, or invade their rights, may shew that government has power, and will have the spirit, to cause itself to be respected: a policy which will evince, that although determined to maintain its own ascendancy, the administration will never lose sight of those means which may promote the best interests of their subjects.

British settlers.

While the government is thus upheld and fortified by its own resources, and the affections of the natives, it may be farther strengthened by the introduction of colonists from Britain. That the scheme of colonial policy pursued by most nations, both in ancient and modern times, has originated too often in accident, and been circumscribed too much in object, is not to be denied. If foreign and un-

inhabited districts have been peopled, it has been owing more to necessity, to the violence of persecution, to individual adventure, to narrow views of traffic, or to the desire of disburthening a parent state of its overgrown population, or of public nuisances, than to any liberal or enlightened considerations of political economy. It is time that governments should awake to a better sense of their true interests, and avail themselves of those means of self-preservation, which a judicious colonisation might afford. Were some of the vacant or thinly-peopled spots of Hindostan occupied by British planters; were suitable encouragement given to sober, peaceful, industrious emigrants, to settle on its fertile plains, which, on equal terms, would doubtless be preferred to the dreary wilds of the new world; were the colonists inured to arms; were an engagement of military service, similar to what the ancient feudal system exacted, to be stipulated as one provision of the tenure, by which they should hold their lands; each of these scattered colonies would prove a kind of open camp, each might repel predatory troops, and each, in succession, by continually interrupting the progress of the more powerful armaments of regular warfare, would prevent them from over-running the country, until a force sufficient to save the empire could be

collected. In short, they would act as advanced posts of a great army, spread abroad upon the face of the country, the commander in chief of which would hold his head quarters at the seat of government. An high authority, exactly in point, may be adduced. " Sometimes," says Montesquieu, " one monarchy subdues another. The smaller the latter, the better it is checked by fortresses: and the larger it is, the better it is preserved by colonies *." Experiments made not only in an adjacent country, but on the very scene to which our inquiries direct our attention, by their success amply confirm the suggestion of their policy. Alexander, upon conquering Persia, established a great number of Grecian colonies in that country. He pursued the same policy in India. By these means so well were his acquisitions secured, that, although after his death the empire was broken to pieces, yet both Persia and Hindostan continued under the dominion of the Greeks. And it is particularly remarked by historians, that not one province of the former revolted; and, in the latter, even the tributary kings whom he had gained over to his interest by his humanity and beneficence, as well as the districts he had subdued by force, re-

* Spirit of Laws, b. x. ch. 10. Vide Note K.

mained subject to one of those generals, who, after exhibiting an example of insubordination, calculated to shake the fidelity of the allied or conquered provinces, by an undeserved felicity shared the unresisting empire among them *.

Political vigilance.

In addition to these arrangements for the security of our empire in the East, other precautions, not of a character so magnificent, but not less necessary, may be adopted. By the expedients usually employed in such cases, a vigilant eye must be kept upon the motions of those neighbouring powers, whose friendship is dubious, or who are most likely to be corrupted by foreign influence; whom motives of resentment or of jealousy, of policy or of restlessness, might incite to aggression. In particular those intrigues with the Mahrattas, carried on by a certain unfriendly European state, who has long envied the extent of our possessions, as well as the ascendancy of our influence in India, and is desirous either of expelling us from that favoured region, or sharing its riches with us, must be watched with unceasing and jealous care. Taught by the example of the great Macedonian chief, we must also cement, by every kind office,

* Robertson's India, pp. 27.—29.

our alliances with such tribes as, by their situation, their courage, their resources, their attachment, are most able, or most disposed, to counteract the intrigues, and intercept or repel the attacks, of our enemies. These remarks apply chiefly to the Mahrattas; and the above seem to have been the views of policy which dictated the sacrifices made to the Poonah tribe after the late conquests: sacrifices which, considering the power and vicinity of this people, appear to have been both wise and moderate. But, with respect to all the other country powers, should a steady plan of amelioration, rural commercial and political, be pursued, such alliances will be easily formed; since it must soon appear to be both the interest and honour of the adjacent states to put themselves under the protection of Britain; to form the most intimate relations with a government at once generous and powerful; who, blessing her subjects and friends, is formidable only to her foes; who demonstrates that she knows so well, both how to assert her own rights, and humble her aggressors,—to defend her allies, and rule but for the benefit of the human race.

Alliances adjacent and

The splendour of a policy so noble, will shine abroad, and enable the government farther to secure the tranquillity of the Company's territories by arrangements with distant

remote.

powers. At length the importance of Egypt, as an avenue to Hindostan, is perceived; and all our interest and exertions must be employed to prevent our enemies from regaining possession of that country. The friendship of Persia would prove a barrier on the west. On the east, an alliance with the Burman empire would establish our security in that quarter. The possession of the Cape of Good Hope would give us, in a great measure, the command of the navigation from Europe. Nor may it be accounted romantic to hope, that, in the course of time, our settlement in South Wales may be of essential advantage, in several respects, to the establishment and support of our empire in Asia.

III. Internal arrangements.

Besides these securities against external aggression, which seem necessary to obtain such a measure of domestic tranquillity, as is essential to a steady and successful prosecution of any scheme of reformation, there are certain internal objects of a general character, which will be highly conducive to this end.

Order.

Of these, order, being one of the most obvious, may be first mentioned. There must be a certain concentration in the economy of the empire. Nothing will contribute more to tranquillity and success, than compactness in the consti-

tution and administration of affairs. A loose and detached policy, consisting of parts ill sorted or feebly connected, is ever ready to fall to pieces of itself; and, amid such concussions of society as may ordinarily be contemplated, especially in a new state of things, will probably soon sink into disorganisation and anarchy. But a scheme of government, intimately connected and harmoniously conspiring to one object, promises, in the natural course of events, to survive long, and prove efficient. This concentration may be local: and, in order promote it more perfectly, it is submitted, whether the seat of government in the Deccan, where the chief danger now lies, and where the bounds of the empire have of late been most enlarged, should not be removed from Madras on the coast, to Seringapatam, a central city, capable of being strongly fortified, and the ancient residence of majesty. An exactly organised system of communication, betwixt the capital and the remote parts of the empire, would contribute also, in a high degree, to the same desirable end. The *lucidus ordo* of detail, the methodised, systematic plan, is as indispensable in the constitution and administration of a government, as in the composition of a discourse. To insure the effect, the observance of unity of design and distribution is not less necessary, in the high-

er departments of political economy, than in the plot and incidents of a well-wrought tragedy.

Disclosure of plans.

To this exact arrangement of parts may be added a gradual and judicious developement of the scheme. In doing this, it seems most expedient to begin with the superior parts; because these, being comprehensive and commanding in their nature and influence, involve and secure the lower; whereas to set out, as the timid and impolitic are apt to do, with trying the inferior, and thence proceeding to the higher, is as if an army, in the face of an enemy drawn up in extended line and expecting hourly the arrival of a powerful reinforcement, should prefer the slow and successive mode of firing by platoons or files, to the vollied discharge, which might at once achieve the victory *.

Cordial subjection of the natives.

Much will depend upon a willing subordination of the conquered provinces. Far indeed will a wise government be from imagining they have gained every point, when they have only suppressed opposition, and extorted passive submission from their subjects. No: it is not the stillness of fear which produces torpor, but the tranquillity of satisfaction, and of good order, that is favourable to useful and ho-

* Vide note L.

nourable activity: it is not the death-like calm, which frequently portends the desolating tempest, but that pleasing serenity which attends the higher order of operations and enjoyments in the universe, and is conducive to the production or display of all the beauties of the earth, of all the splendours of the heavens, that good rulers will seek to create, or delight to contemplate. But how is this pleasing result to be obtained? How is the cordial subjection of the natives to be insured? Those forces which are competent to repel invasion, may also be sufficient, in ordinary cases, to subdue disaffection. But, in executive policy, as in criminal jurisprudence, it is better to prevent than to punish the violations of law; and, under a prudent administration, an appeal to arms will always be the last resource, and very infrequent. Another measure, not less efficient, though less obvious, than the terrors of a standing army, offers itself to our adoption. It is the construction of cities in favourable situations, to be occupied by colonists and natives, in such proportions and with such privileges respectively, as circumstances may require. This is no theoretic suggestion. It has been tried, and tried with complete success. Alexander the Great, to whose policy we have already appealed, and of whose talents as a statesman the world seem hitherto to have

formed an imperfect idea, in order to consolidate his empire, and controul or conciliate his new subjects, had recourse uniformly to this expedient: "In every province which he subdued, he made choice of proper stations, where he built and fortified cities, in which he placed garrisons, composed partly of such of the natives as conformed to the Grecian manners and discipline, and partly of such of his European subjects as were worn out with the fatigues of service, and wished for repose and a permanent establishment. These cities were numerous, and served not only as a chain of posts to keep open the communication betwixt the different provinces of his dominion, but as places of strength to overawe and curb the conquered people. The farther he pushed his conquests from the banks of the Euphrates, which may be considered as the centre of his dominions, he found it necessary to build and to fortify a greater number of cities. Several of these, to the east and to the south of the Caspian Sea, are mentioned by ancient authors; and, in India itself, he founded two cities on the banks of the Hydaspes, and a third on the Acesines *." He who considers attentively the influence which such esta-

* Robertson's India, pp. 24, 25.

blishments are calculated to have, will not be surprised that enlightened and reflecting men have ascribed to this measure the wonderful permanency of his conquests, amid the subsequent concussions of his empire. The same plan was adopted by the Romans, at an early period of their history, and, having been pursued from the commencement of that astonishing career of conquests which terminated in the subjugation of the world, contributed in no small degree to consolidate the extended empire. To its auspicious influence, in uniting the vanquished with the conquerors, Sallust forcibly alludes in the following passage: "*Hi postquam in una mœnia convenere, dispari genere, dissimili lingua, alius alio more viventes: incredibile memoratu est, quam facile coaluerint* *."

Acquired confidence.

This remark of the judicious historian suggests the tendency of this measure to promote another effect extremely desirable, which may not have been so commonly noticed: I mean its influence in kneading the divided community of natives and foreigners into one mass, so as to create mutual confidence. Men often require only to be brought together to love each other; and there seems to be a natural alliance betwixt the gentleness of the Hindoo, and the generosity of

* Cat. ch. vi. p. 7.

the Briton; the valour of the one, and the interesting simplicity of the other. With correspondence of character, other circumstances may concur to beget confidence. Sometimes Providence puts it in the power of conquerors, by a single act of humanity or generosity, to touch the finer sensibilities of the heart, and to attach a whole people unalterably to them. When such glorious opportunities are presented, they ought to be seized and improved with avidity. So did Scipio: and the result was more honourable to him, and more propitious to the interests of Rome, than the most brilliant victory he ever gained in the field. But occasions of such splendid beneficence seldom occur in the history of human affairs; and it is by a certain temper of spirit, train of deportment, and *tout ensemble* of character, that either an individual or a government usually acquires confidence. Let the magistrate then, who would attach the hearts of the Hindoos to himself, labour to support and adorn the native character of Britons; and study, by a wise and moderate, by a beneficent and energetic system of administration, to cause himself to be at once loved and feared. Let him consider well the importance of this attainment, since without it no plan of improvement, which involves the moral and intellectual proficiency of mankind, can possibly suc-

ceed. Let him mark well the difference betwixt this confidence, and mere passive acquiescence in his government. Let him dread, by any impolicy on his part, to inspire that deep-rooted prejudice, which may steel them against his kindness, and cause them to suspect even his liberalities: "*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.*" Let him revolve, and study to obviate, those unfortunate circumstances, which might prevent him from conciliating their regard: that jealousy, which is natural to a conquered people; those vestiges of the miseries of war, which tend to perpetuate alienation; that abuse of authority, which may possibly exist, or arise, in any of the departments of government; and those intrigues of the disaffected natives in the bosom of the empire, or of foreign emissaries insidiously introduced, which may be instilling prejudice or fostering discontent. Let him, in a word, ponder, and be emulous to copy, the illustrious character thus delineated by an admired historian: "*Beneficio quam metu, obligare homines malit; exterasque gentes, fide ac societate junctas habere, quam tristi subjectas servitio* *."

Interest in object.

If, together with confidence in government, an interest in the success of the plans themselves could be inspired, every

* Liv. lib. 26.

thing might be augured from this happy concurrence. Before the natives have experienced the benefit of their operation, this interest cannot exist unless measures be taken to create it. Confidence in the administration of the government may indeed contribute to inspire it, but an implicit confidence is seldom given to a government of conquest, at least in its early stages; and, though it were given, yet it is an enlightened interest alone that can rouse the activities of the soul, and give to a scheme the impulse of all the energies of a nation. By a candid, though prudent disclosure of the project, in its details and design, to some men of rank, who stand high in the estimation of the natives, much, it is evident, would be gained. Their concurrence would probably be secured by this confidential communication; and, as any influence which they might exert to promote the object, would be regarded with an unsuspicious eye, so their example would have a mighty effect in creating a certain favourable bias among the lower orders of the people, who are usually guided, in their feelings and opinions, as well as in their fashions of less consequence, by those whom they are accustomed to admire and obey.

Co-operation with government.

Finally: care must be taken to rouse the natives, if possible, to an active and strenuous prosecution of the views of

government. Already has it been remarked, that a certain original lethargy of spirit (much increased, no doubt, by the uniform subjection of their nation) strongly marks the character of the Hindoos. To awaken them from this ancient and universal torpor, to an ardent pursuit of the new career of glory set before them, must appear to be an object of much moment. Nor is it less arduous than important. To hold up to the public mind, in a light sufficiently attractive, plans which it might be impolitic fully to disclose almost to any; to improve every favourable circumstance, in the character or situation of a people, and in the occurences of the times; to awaken those latent principles of action, which our benevolent Creator has implanted in the human constitution; to distribute rewards and punishments, in suitable proportion and form, the sunshine of favour or the lightning of wrath in their various irradiations; to infuse a new spirit into the body of the nation, and rouse a listless race from the slumber of ages,—is an enterprise, which requires talents and an attention that few possess; a knowledge of human nature, and an adaptation of human polity, that is rare indeed; in short, (if we may be allowed the expression) a certain creative energy, that can be expected only in minds of the first order.

IV.
Polity.

In the body politic, the institution of its government may be considered as the heart, whence all the life and motion of the system proceed. How this shall be modified in India; or how its arrangements may be made most conducive to the improvement of the subjects, must then appear to be questions of primary importance on this subject. The inquiry divides itself into two parts: First, What farther regulations it may be expedient to introduce into the economy of the ruling power itself? and, Secondly, If any, what improvement can be suggested upon the system of government, pursued in reference to the subjected states, who have been hitherto permitted to live under their own laws unchanged?

What done.

1. Already much, perhaps all, has been done, that can well be devised, to guard the pecuniary interests of the Company against the peculations of their servants, and to secure the due administration of their immediate concerns in the provinces, and in the seats of government. Nor are such regulations to be contemned. They enter deep into the moral character of the governors, and must contribute, in no small degree, to the stability, the dignity, and the prosperity of our settlements and conquests in that quarter. Yet other measures, though not so immediately connected with commercial aggrandisement, are not to be overlooked.

Proper president.

We have adverted already to the talents and character of him, who may appear fitted to preside over this most extensive and valuable appendage of the British empire. That genius and abilities are confined to no class of the community, is readily admitted; but it may be assumed, that a spirit and views, suitable to a station of such eminence and trust, are usually to be found, only among those who have attained distinction by the exercise of their talents and virtues in public life, or who, born to rank, have adorned hereditary dignity by personal excellence. The choice of commercial men to fill the office of chief governor, may appear most congenial to the character of the Company, and may promise more parsimony in the expenditure of revenue; but is not likely (in most cases) to give the greatest dignity, or energy, or liberality and enlargement of view to the administration of government. While the leger-book is exactly kept, the record of public affairs may be sullied: while the clerks are duly chequed, the enemy may be advancing unopposed to the very gates of the presidency: while the investments are regularly made, the honour of the British name may be tarnished, the country itself may be lost for ever. Who knows not that it is as difficult for the human mind, as for the human body, to live out of its own element

or climate; to rise above its ordinary level in its actings; and to accommodate itself, with ease and effect, to new habits and occupations. Minuteness of attention, and magnificence of design; the calm and uniform tenor of a life of business, and the grand in exploit or the prompt and energetic in military enterprise, are almost entirely incompatible. Besides, it is of the utmost importance that he who is invested with this high and remote trust, should, as a pledge of his faithful administration, leave behind him in his character, his fortune, and it may be his hereditary honours, a deep stake in the mother country.

Tour.

But, whoever be the governor, it may conduce much to the permanency of the government, and the promotion of the plans of improvement, that he be instructed, statedly, and after an interval of no long duration, to make a tour in his official capacity through the empire, attended with a proper escort, and displaying an impressive majesty. This is an ordinance in China; and might be adopted in some other countries with good effect. Several salutary consequences may be expected to result from this measure. It would tend to conciliate the love and confidence of the natives, by shewing that the chief took an interest in their affairs, and, instead of immuring himself within the pre-

cincts of a palace or the walls of a garrison, declined not to trust himself among them, and to inquire into their concerns. By bringing all under his eye, frequently and uniformly, it would conduce continually to encourage the obedient and awe the disaffected. And, by the influence of his notice, and occasional remuneration, it would have the effect of enlivening industry and exertion, of giving a powerful and frequent impulse to the course of public improvement, in every place. Condescending, as a tribunal of the last resort, to hear and redress the grievances of his subjects, he would exhibit the attractive spectacle of majesty attempered with humility, and encircle his character with a lustre at once awful and amiable.

Co-operation of other servants of the Company.

By the talents or exertions of one individual, however dignified or active, comparatively little can be accomplished. If the other servants of the Company, in their several stations, do not co-operate with the chief magistrate in the good work; if each, laying aside all selfish and mercenary views, be not impressed with the consideration, that to him is committed the high trust of supporting, by the example of his obedience and public spirit, the dignity of the British character, and the energies of the provincial government; if, lost to a sense of virtue and of usefulness, all,

or almost all, think only of adding to their own gains, or wallowing in the voluptuousness of eastern luxury, schemes of civilisation the most judicious, prospects of success the most flattering, cannot be realised, will end only in the bitterness of disappointment.

Preserve and improve their proper character as Britons.

Nor is this apprehension altogether imaginary. It is unfortunate, and somewhat surprising, that, while the hardy texture of the British character has powerfully resisted the influence of all other climates, and, like our native oak, endured the fiercest extremes without bending, it should yet have yielded, almost uniformly, to the insinuating blandishments of Hindostan. In those who return from other countries, you commonly see the original traits conspicuously retained, though perhaps not a little modified; but in the eastern Nabob they are often effaced. He, not unfrequently, brings back with him a certain squeamishness of taste, and sickly sensibility of feeling; a certain love of perpetual gaiety without enjoyment, of travelling without curiosity; a dislike of home, and ennui of life, which are essentially different from the great lines of British temper, and render him, among his countrymen at home, at once an object of surprise and of pity. This fact shews, that there is danger lest the bold and somewhat rugged elements of our national

spirit, should, instead of assimilating the Hindoo character to itself, be melted down into the softness of the country: lest the voluptuousness of Hindostan should prove more fatal than its wisdom or its valour; and, like the luxurious ease of Capua, prepare the victors for being at length subdued by those whom they had vanquished. Frequent emigration from the mother country, and the rapid succession of the servants of the Company, have hitherto contributed to avert this event. But, in proportion to the stability of the government, to its prosperity, and to the inducements which are held out to a permanent settlement in India, must be the strength of this assimilating influence, and the reasonableness of our fears. To counteract this fatal tendency, some new measures, it would seem, must be adopted. Let government watch, with anxious jealousy, over the operation of those causes which tend to enervate the vigour of the British mind, and so threaten to undermine the very basis upon which the fabric of our power in that quarter rests. Let promotion be the premium of maintaining its energies unimpaired. Sumptuary laws have been resorted to by legislators, to restrain the influence of luxury, and they may have some effect when enforced by the vigilance and

remuneration of the public authorities. But such regulations, like those which have been adopted in some other cases, will soon become obsolete and useless, will serve only to encumber the statute book, or at most to turn the current of voluptuousness into other channels, unless, by the example of the rulers, and the good sense of our countrymen in general, the aid of fashion be brought to support the authority of law; and unless the British, urged by every consideration the most important, be persuaded, as a point at once of honour and of duty, to guard assiduously against the overpowering influence of those indulgences, which, creeping insensibly upon them like a chilling frost, may benumb their vital energies, and at last induce such a constitutional lethargy, as will prove the " Sleep of death."

System of government as it relates to the subject.

2. Let every Briton remember that he is charged with the high duty of supporting the honour and interests of his country, and that it should be his aim, not to bring down his character to the Hindoo level, but to raise the national spirit and institutions of that unfortunate people among whom he dwells, to the high rank of those of his own country. And let the constituted authorities recollect, that a British government, which shall surrender itself to the effe-

minacy of the country over which it presides, and be studious only to enrich itself with the spoils of the provinces it has subdued, will deserve all those opprobrious epithets, with which our nation has been sometimes so illiberally stigmatised; will disinherit itself of its true honour; and, in the language of Hindostan, lose its *high cast* among the governments of the earth.

Changes not contrary to the spirit of any former concession of the British legislature.

With much wisdom was it resolved, that the inhabitants of India should be permitted to live under their own laws: for, to change the laws of a country is a perilous attempt; those of Hindostan are characterised by a humanity superior in some respects even to those of Britain; and it may be presumed, that a constitution which has stood the test of ages, is, upon the whole, best adapted to the genius and circumstances of that people among whom it has so long subsisted. Notwithstanding, this resolution cannot be reasonably supposed to preclude such partial changes as an enlightened consideration of their polity may suggest, and a due regard to their improvement may require.

This seems to have been contemplated by Sir William Jones; for he anticipates the introduction of a code, which might remedy the many natural defects in the old jurisprudence of India, and, without deviating from its original cha-

racter; accommodate its details to an enlightened and commercial age *.

Union of states.

Disconnected states, or kingdoms which are but nominally associated under the same government, especially when a certain feebleness of character marks the whole, are most liable to internal dissention, and violent disruption. Of this remark the Mogul empire might be adduced as a striking illustration. With this beacon before our eyes, we should be warned of impending evil, and admonished, that, besides their accidental combination under the ruling power, a political union of the detached native governments will be an eligible measure. To give the plan of such a constitution, or to delineate its ramifications, would lead us into too minute a consideration of this part of our subject. These arrangements must be determined by local circumstances, and by other peculiarities, with which those who reside at a distance have not the means of being fully acquainted. But a general convention of states, consisting of persons of distinguished authority and influence in each, (suppose the chiefs of the hereditary rulers,) assembled, from time to time, with the sanction, and under the eye, of

* Pref. to Laws of Menu.

the British government, to deliberate about such matters of common concern as may be laid before them, might be productive of various beneficial consequences. It would assist in obliterating appearances of subjugation, which must be ever galling in some degree to the vanquished. It would highly gratify the feelings of the rulers, and the partialities of the people, who, in general, retain a high respect for their native governors. It would cause the latter to appreciate the advantages of union, and give them a stake, in point of gratitude, of honour, and of interest, in the support of that establishment, by which they should be thus embodied. It would attach the hearts of the natives, and secure their submission to the constituted authorities, by giving it the appearance of obedience to their own rulers. It would concentrate the administration of the empire, and give it that compacted form of which it might be susceptible, and which, as we have before suggested, would be highly conducive to its security and interests. And, above all, it would enable the presiding powers to avail themselves of the wisdom of the native princes in forming their plans of reformation, and of a more dignified and perfect co-operation in conducting them to a happy consummation. We are sensible the apprehension, that such an association

would afford the subordinate states facilities of combining against the ruling power, might be urged as a formidable objection to this measure. But this objection appears to be more specious than solid. Assuredly, that they are not constitutionally assembled, will not of itself prevent hostile confederacies: and, since all their intercourse and transactions must necessarily be conducted under the eye of the general government, their being legally convened, when duly considered, cannot be supposed even to facilitate such conspiracies.

Present governors.

It might be expected, from the national character of the Gentoos, that their native rulers would be mild in their sway, and endeared to their subjects. Such is the fact. The government of the Omrahs, Soubahs, Rajahs, &c. partakes much of the patriarchal character; and, though by the constitution uncontrouled, is, we are told, seldom tyrannically exercised. Each of them (generally speaking) acts as a patriot prince: each of them is regarded with reverence and with love, as the father of his people*. Those territorial arrangements existing in India, similar to the feudal system in Europe, which carry up the views of the subjects to the

* Dr Robertson's App. Disq. concerning India, p. 268.

throne, as not only the seat of authority, but the source of property, contribute greatly to confirm these attachments. To tear asunder ties so intimate and sacred, by displacing the Hindoo rulers, would be a measure violent, dangerous, highly inexpedient; and accordingly, by a wise policy, has been declined. But the other extreme, which is probably not less impolitic, has not been avoided with equal care. To strip the native princes of their splendour, and of those revenues which are necessary to maintain their consequence; to reduce them to be mere pageants of state and shadows of former royalty, is to make them appear, too obviously, to be the degraded tools of foreign dominion; is to deprive them, however well affected, of all influence with the natives, and of all power to promote either the British interests or those plans of policy which have the progressive civilization of the natives in view. While, then, they are intended to serve as an intermediate link in that great chain of policy, which binds the people to the presiding government, let them not, by being spoiled of their hereditary emoluments and honours, be so enfeebled as to be incapacitated for fulfilling that important office, and holding together, with sufficient firmness and dignity, the different parts of the great system. Let not solicitude, lest they be exalted so high as to be capable of doing injury, induce us to de-

press them so low, that they can prove of no essential service. Anxious that they may not possess power sufficient to disturb the tranquillity of the new order of things, or regain their ancient sovereignty, let us also beware, lest, by oppressive exactions, and by bereaving them of every remnant of their former greatness, we either inspire disaffection and instigate them to rebellion, or, having stripped them of all consequence, render them, if they maintain their allegiance, entirely useless and idly cumbersome to our government.

Laws.

That political, and even juridical institutions have great influence in forming, or fixing, the manners of a people, is readily admitted; but, when sanguine theorists ascribe to them an efficacy almost omnipotent, forgetting at once the history of human governments, and the character of human nature, they only move our pity or our scorn. The truth is, that, except in a few extraordinary instances, both the general system of policy, and the particular laws of every state, have originated in circumstances previously existing, and indicate a spirit already operating. This is the fact with respect to the Indian legislation. It uniformly bears the mild and discriminating characters of a race, inoffensive and somewhat advanced in civilisation; and seems to have grown out of a state of things, which is known to have existed among that people from time immemorial. Every one

may recollect the high encomium bestowed by the celebrated Montesquieu upon the criminal jurisprudence of Hindostan. "The people of India," says he, "are mild, tender, and compassionate. Hence their legislators repose a great confidence in them. They have established very few punishments, these are not severe, nor are they rigorously executed."—"Happy climate, which gives birth to purity of manners, and produces lenity of laws*!" The latter part of this panegyric is not unmerited. Nor would it be wise in us to alter the character of this division of their code. Even any statute, providing a penalty for insubordination to the new order of things, would be impolitic. It could give no additional security to the established authorities, and would serve only to remind the Hindoos continually, that they were a conquered nation. Without introducing new penal statutes, let it be the ambition of the government of India, to assume, and, as far as circumstances will permit, liberally to exercise, that high prerogative of dispensing mercy, which belongs to the supreme power. In presiding over this interesting department of duty, the chief magistrate will have many opportunities of ingratiating himself

* Spirit of Laws, vol. i. pp. 282, 283.

with the natives, and of conciliating their affections to the ruling powers. Of these he ought judiciously to avail himself. "So many are the advantages which sovereigns gain by clemency: such love, such glory attends it, that it is generally a point of happiness to have an opportunity of exercising it*."

Yet we conceive there are some important improvements which may be made, either upon the distributions of punishment, or upon the administration of justice.

More equal legislation.

That partial and invidious distinction, in favour of the upper ranks of their factitious society and particularly of the Bramins, which pervades the whole system, ought, in justice and in equity, to be abolished as soon as the people are prepared to receive the alteration. And, without trenching on the integrity of a venerated code, it may be most expedient to attempt this innovation by a new provisionary regulation, which, avoiding the odium of a direct repeal, might serve as a directory to the proceedings of the courts of justice, and thus, by degrees, insinuate the idea of an equality of rights into the public mind, and introduce the observance of it into authoritative practice.

* Spirit of Laws, vol. i. p. 112.

"In every Pergunnah," according to Colonel Dow, "there is established a cutchery, or court of justice." Let the government, by appointing the most learned and deserving of the natives to preside in these provincial judicatures, by adopting and enforcing suitable regulations for their procedure, and, by securing adequate salaries, provide for the dignity and independence of the tribunals, so that justice may be administered in an able, impartial, and enlightened manner. To these, borrowing a part of our judicial policy, may be added the institution of circuit-courts, by directing some of the most respectable of the judges, particularly of that class of the Braminical tribe called Pundits, (with whom the care of the laws, by the original constitution of the empire, is specially entrusted) to make the tour of certain districts at stated seasons. Thus the people, having the majesty of justice often, at least, before their eyes, would be deterred from the commission of crimes; and, when wrongs were done, the injured would have the privilege of frequent and easy access to the proper courts for redress.

Courts stationary and ambulatory.

The introduction of the trial by jury, if it was found compatible with the safety of the empire and the genius of the natives, would be another great improvement in the admi-

Trial by jury.

nistration of justice. How much does Britain owe to this admirable institution! It is the palladium of her free constitution; and its glory, as well as its pledge of permanence. Nor can it fail at once to adorn and uphold every system of government, into which it can with propriety be introduced; and with whose spirit, and the temper of the subjects, it may be found to accord. The bread-fruit tree of Britain, it is a noble stock of British growth and culture; and every nation, among whom it may be planted and flourish, rejoicing in its precious fruits, will have cause to bless those who shall convey to them this choice production of our country. In the details of Indian juridical policy, we find a singular approach made to the institution of a trial by jury. It is required that the presiding judge shall be assisted by certain persons skilled in the laws, and retain at least ten Bramins in permanent fee for that purpose*. A slight alteration would make the conformity exact. And this, if accomplished, would contribute to rescue the Hindoos from that abject servility of mind, which is a prominent foible of their temper; and, by training them to a spirit of more manliness, might, by degrees, create those

* Account prefixed to Compilation of Indian Laws, by Halhed, p. 111.

energies of mind, and that force of character, of which independence is the parent, but of which this effeminate people are so extremely destitute. Whether it might not retard and perplex the administration of justice, were the trial by jury extended to civil as well as to criminal causes, it is for an enlightened legislature to examine. Sir William Jones, than whom none could be more competent to investigate or decide the question, lamented the want of such aid in his official character*; but it is possible that the prevalence of an overweaning modesty, or the partialities of a Briton, may have too much swayed that enlightened patriot in expressing such regrets. Unquestionably India, forming an integral part of the British empire, is entitled to a communication of all the privileges of Britons, as far as may be safe or practicable; and it is the duty of the ruling powers to infuse into the system and administration of their Asiatic government, as much of the spirit and provisions of freedom as circumstances will permit. And, involving much of the dignity and comfort of mankind,

'Tis liberty alone that gives the flower
Of fleeting life its lustre and perfume,

* Works, vol. iii. p. 4. Vide Note M.

And we are weeds without it. All constraint,
Except what wisdom lays on evil men,
Is evil: hurts the faculties, impedes
Their progress in the road of science, blinds
The eye-sight of discovery, and begets,
In those that suffer it, a sordid mind,
Bestial, a meagre intellect, unfit
To be the tenant of man's noble form *.

Nevertheless, in politics, (as in some cases of morals when duty is left to be regulated by circumstances) the *quicquid oportet* depends occasionally upon the *quicquid decet;* and, in the above, as in other instances, the tendency of the climate to individual rule, the long oppression of the human mind, and the recent establishment of British authority, may render the immediate introduction of this institution inexpedient. Too sudden a communication of the blessings of freedom, like an instantaneous effulgence of the light of day, would prove hurtful.

But should any doubt be entertained, that the transference of this characteristic glory of the British constitution would be expedient, another measure, it would seem, could not fail to be highly beneficial. I allude to a connected and minute distribution of the powers of the magistrates,

* Cowper.

throughout the empire, corresponding in some measure to that which is established in "liberty's cherished isle," and so organised, that each, as he ascends in rank, should be the legal superintendant of him who is next in station; and all should carry up, in a regular gradation, their power, their responsibility, and the accounts of their procedure, from time to time, to the first magistrate. Such an arrangement would bind together the official characters of the empire, indeed of the whole community; and give the chief governor, continually, a hold of their attachments, and a knowledge of their affairs. It is thus that the various judges would not only form a firm phalanx in support of law, of order, of subordination; but, by their distribution, their character, their influence, entering into the views, and obedient to the wishes of government, would powerfully promote such schemes of amelioration as the latter might adopt.

Upon the body of the common law, as far as it respects matters of civil right and trespass, little alteration, besides what we have already mentioned, and what may be necessary at once to accommodate the system to the new order of things as it arises, and to bend it in subserviency to the progressive improvement of the people, will, it is conceived, require to be made. Upon inspection, the institutes of

Menu, and that compilation of laws which was executed under the patronage of the late Governor Hastings, are found to contain details, which, though often tediously, and in some instances disgustingly minute, are yet founded, except where the legislator was biassed by the partialities of that unequal policy to which we have so often adverted, "upon those great and immutable principles of justice and equity, which the human mind acknowledges and respects, in every age, and in all parts of the world *." Whoever has read "The Comparison betwixt the Jewish and Hindoo Codes," will be at no loss to which the preference should be assigned: but from the latter, inferior as it is to the Mosaic legislation, its due praise should not be withheld: upon it indiscriminate censure ought not to be passed.

The regulations which require to be adopted in Indian policy, must not only be in some instances supplemental, but also, in others not less important, corrective. There are arrangements, both of institution and manners, highly

* Dr Robertson, App. Ind. Disq

inimical to their civilisation, which must be rectified or retrenched.

Of these the most prominent is the institution of casts. Concerning the nature, the antiquity, and the injurious influence of this peculiar feature of Hindoo polity, we have already spoken.

How shall this gigantic enemy of human improvement, this Colossus of Braminical ascendancy, be overthrown?—Two methods offer themselves to our choice.

The cast may be abolished by a special legislative provision. But, when we reflect how long this institution has subsisted; how deeply it has wrought itself into the intellectual prejudices and practical habits of the nation; how intimately it is incorporated with the whole system of their policy, sacred and civil; what high privileges it secures to the superior ranks, especially to the priesthood; what a mighty influence they who are thus most interested in its support have upon the minds of the common people, particularly under despotic governments, above all in India; and what a cheerful acquiescence the inferior classes manifest in what they account the allotment of heaven—when we reflect upon these things, it may seem that an immediate and direct abolition would be a perilous measure. Abrupt and

revolutionary in a high degree, it would suddenly shock all their prejudices, dissolve at once the whole fabric of Indian polity, instantaneously convulse the established order of society, and, exciting a mighty commotion, probably ingulph, and dash to pieces in its tremendous vortex, that power who should attempt to direct the mighty movement. More than mortal hand would it require to uphold a government which, amid this vast fluctuation and collision, should appear to have its basis "founded upon the seas, and set upon the floods." As the attempt to overthrow this institution, by any authoritative abolition, may appear to be sufficiently hazardous to deter a wise government from adopting this alternative, so there is some reason to presume, that, although tried with all this risk, it would prove ineffectual. Much of the success of any experiment in political economy must depend upon its accommodation to the customs and manners of the people, or to their modes of thinking. To these every prudent legislator looks as to his most powerful auxiliaries. With these on his side, he may hope to prevail; unassisted, or opposed by them, he can reasonably prognosticate nothing but ultimate disappointment. Such in this case, there is cause to fear, would be the result. The government might observe no distinction among the mem-

bers of the different casts in their administration: but does it follow that the people would at once abolish this arrangement in their imaginations, or overlook it in their intercourse? Are not sentiments and habits too delicate, and too subtle, to be changed by the gross application of compulsory statutes? Will the tempers and prejudices of a people obey the legislative fiat; and, like the spirits of the deep marshalled by the rod of the magician, as we read in romance, move obedient to the voice of authority, and arrange themselves as the magistrate directs? Or, can we forget how firmly this institution has withstood, not only the sapping influence of ages, but the shock of successive conquests, and the violence of Mahometan despots?

Hope and fear both forbid us to have recourse to this bolder measure. A system of policy, less splendid and daring, but also less adventurous and direct, seems more eligible. This venerable and well-entrenched fortress must be attacked by slow and silent means. If taken and demolished at all, it must be by siege, not by storm. But to what circumstances may we look for its gradual, yet certain overthrow? Christianity is already operating this effect in a slight degree, by causing some, for the sake of a good conscience, to despise the disgrace and inconveniences con-

sequent upon the loss of cast: and, the greater the number who do so, the more will the coercive energy of the system be impaired, its terrors will become less formidable, and its descent to ruin will be accelerated. Let then the progress of this benign religion be promoted, and the institution of casts will fall of course. Let the rulers also, who, when they use their authority well, will always have great influence in moulding the manners of a people, and regulating even the arbitrary intercourse of society, shew, in all their elections to places of power and trust, that the choice is independent of such distinctions, and rests alone upon considerations that are personal, those of integrity and of talent. Could some of the more estimable and popular of the higher casts, be induced to renounce the exclusive and fastidious privileges of their orders, and mingle occasionally with those of inferior stations, their conduct, if prudent, and accompanied opportunely with illustrations of the pernicious influence of the ancient arrangement, would have a powerful influence both in abating the prejudices of others, and inciting them to imitate their example. The preferment of some of the lower orders, whose abilities were conspicuous, and characters unexceptionable, if not to the functions of religion, yet to the duty of instructing youth, to the dignity

of magistrates, or to the honours of military rank, might have the double effect, both of engaging them in the views and interests of government, and of encouraging others to aspire, by similar means, after such distinction. Even those of the Pariars, who should be found deserving, might, with the same design, be brought forward, and suitably employed. When these expedients should appear to have operated a considerable influence in loosening the firm cement of this ancient fabric, its dilapidation might be hastened by means more direct and forcible. Some of the exclusive privileges of the higher orders, particularly those that were most palpably invidious and unjust, might be withdrawn. Encouragements might be held out to intermarriages. Writings, exposing the impolicy of the institution, particularly as it depressesand injures the mass of the community, might be dispersed. Express statutes might be enacted, forbidding regard to such distinction, in some of their most obnoxious views at all times, or to the whole on certain public occasions, as on those of religious festivity, of which there is already one precedent in the customs of the country. Thus, by degrees, the whole system would go into decay; and these political barriers, which a selfish ambition, or a perverted ingenuity, have reared, forming a state of society the most

unnatural and the most adverse to improvement, shall, like those walls which Roman policy drew across our island to sever one portion of the natives from another, either altogether disappear, or present only their scattered vestiges and obscure fragments, as objects of antiquarian curiosity, or incitements to national gratitude.

While the attention of government is turned to the removal of those injurious partitions, which separate one order of the community from another, there is one class of the human race, who, in the extremes of political society, have been always unduly depressed, and whose condition in India claims particular sympathy: We mean the female part of the species. Amid savage tribes you find this interesting portion of mankind oppressed by drudgery; in luxurious and despotic states they are most commonly herded together within the walls of a seraglio, guarded with jealous care, and not unfrequently used, by their capricious and tyrannical lords, with brutal barbarity. That the condition in which women are placed, and the manner in which they are treated, has a mighty influence upon the character of society, none, who has considered the history of mankind with any attention, will be disposed to deny. In countries where due attention is paid to their education, with the view of ren-

dering them at once virtuous and enlightened; where they are allowed to rise to their proper level in society, and accustomed to mingle freely in the intercourse of life; what a zest do they give to the pleasures of existence! what a delicacy and dignity to the forms and language of the social circle! what a softness to the manners, and what a fascinating charm to the whole exterior of society! But, in nations where the cultivation of the female mind and heart is altogether neglected, or injudiciously circumscribed; where women are used as beasts of burden, or as ministers of vicious excess; where they are depressed in the scale of society, and thrown into the back-ground of the landscape of life; where they are forced to toil at the spade and the oar, or immured in cloisters and harams;—consequences the reverse of the above ensue, and there you observe, either a ferocity of spirit and a rudeness of mind and manners, which shocks the feeling, or a certain relaxation of mental temperament and voluptuousness of propensity, destitute alike of vigour and of virtue, which moves your pity. The latter part of this remark applies to the subject of our present inquiry. In Hindostan they have never attained that rank in society to which they are entitled, and to which it should be the object of an enlightened and liberal policy to raise

them. There you see them confined like slaves, and transported from place to place like felons; taught nothing but the arts of decoration, and inspired with no sentiment but that of vanity. The laws themselves recognise their abject state; and, descending from their dignity, speak of them often in terms of contempt, of suspicion, of gross indelicacy, and of opprobrium. But there are two circumstances, in the policy or customs of the Hindoos, to which we wish especially to advert: the unrestrained indulgence of polygamy, and the horrid practice of immolating the favourite spouse upon the funeral pile of her deceased husband.

Whence the latter custom, so repugnant to the temper and character of the Hindoos, and so anomalous in the general system of their institutions, originated, whether, as some have imagined, from a crafty design to preserve the life of the husband amid the intrigues of faithless females, from some motive purely religious, or from some occurrence which it was thought proper thus to commemorate, might be a subject of curious investigation. But, assuming the fact with its injurious and inhuman character, it belongs to our present object only to ponder the remedy. The discovery is not difficult; nor is delicacy in this case necessary. Here the lawgiver ought not to hesitate. It is moral turpitude:

it is inconsistent with the first principles of humanity: it is contrary to the genius of the nation: it is said to be going into disuse: and let the practice be abolished by an immediate and peremptory prohibition. The law itself, as if conscious of its own enormity, dispenses with the sacrifice; but upon a most severe and impolitic condition*. This dispensation is further counteracted by the promise, which, in their mythology, is made to the fair victim, of an immediate admission into the highest heavens, to dwell with Brahma and a few of his first favourites. Hence the permission of burning is counted a privilege: "A Bramin once told me," writes a scientific traveller, who had visited India, "that his mother had been highly distinguished, by having obtained, as the reward of her virtue, the honour of being allowed to burn herself with her deceased husband." 'Tis true, according to Niebuyr, this cruel custom has been prohibited both by Europeans and Mahometans; but from recent accounts we learn that it is still practised, and not a few are sacrificed every year under the very eye of authority. Still,

> The widow'd Indian, when her lord expires,
> Mounts the dread pile, and braves the funeral fires!

* Ch. xx. last sect. Halh. Comp.

Let then the rule be rigorously enforced. Let it be extended to all the new acquisitions of the Company, and made absolute.

The other practice to which we have alluded, is of an origin less dubious, and, though in aspect not so inhuman, is in influence even more unfavourable to the general interests of society, and to the progress of true refinement. In Hindostan polygamy is established by law; and if the common people content themselves with one wife, it is because crimes, introduced by this practice, and extremely prevalent, supersede the necessity of maintaining more, and because their extreme indigence cannot afford the means of a large domestic establishment. Among the wealthy natives, and especially among the Mussulmans, polygamy is carried to the utmost extreme of licentiousness. It will appear hardly credible to a European, that some seraglios have been known to contain hundreds, or even thousands * of females, secluded from all the comforts of society, and subjected to the capricious sensualities of an individual. This institution is against nature; for God, by creating throughout the earth an almost equal proportion of the

* Vide note N.

sexes, has, in the most unequivocal manner, intimated his will, that only one woman should be assigned to one man. And it is no less against society. The history of the practice has, in every age, been marked by mischiefs innumerable. Distracted affections, or the total loss of them on the part of the husband; jealousies and contentions on the part of the fair competitor; destruction of the harmony and comforts of domestic society; lasting feuds of families, with the neglect of parental education; voluptuousness on the part of the rich, producing that imbecility and indolence, both of mind and of body, which have long characterised the people of the East; the abasement of one half of the human species, who are degraded into slaves of passion to the other half; the frequent and often unnatural crimes into which the poor are betrayed by this worst of all monopolies;—such are a few of the many evils attendant upon this institution *. But, with all its concomitant mischiefs, so congenial is the practice to the licentious propensities of human nature; so long has it been sanctioned in Hindostan; so intimately is it connected with the fascinating pre-eminence of wealth and

* For the suggestion of some, and the confirmation of all, of these views, the author is indebted to the late Archdeacon Paley.

of honour, that it is probable no arguments could persuade the legislature to incur the hazard arising from an immediate abolition. To what then are we to look for the remedy of a practice which taints the temper and principles of the individual, embitters the very source of social happiness, and corrodes the vitals of public vigour and virtue? Whether the idea, connected with the practice among the Hindoos, and recognised in their laws, that one of these wives is the chief, might not be seized by the reigning power, to invest her with such exclusive privileges, and with an ascendancy so great, as to deter others from entering into the household,—is an inquiry which may merit consideration, but which a knowledge of minute circumstances of a domestic nature could alone enable us to determine. The number of wives might also be restricted by a special statute, or a tax might be laid upon their increase in a rising proportion, and so heavy as would amount to a prohibition of many at least. To mitigate the evils arising to the family and to the public from the negligent education of the offspring, legislative authority might be interposed to sanction and enforce the dictates of natural affection; and each wife might be made responsible to the magistrate for the rearing of her own children, who should be committed, for this purpose,

to her charge exclusively. After all, however, so inveterate is this evil, so extensive is its prevalence in Asia, that, it would seem, we can look for a complete cure only to the superior illumination and benign influence of Christianity, which has, in so many other respects as well as in this, rectified the views and reformed the manners of those nations among whom it has happily obtained an ascendancy.

V. Common arts.

From the consideration of the general structure of the government, and of the subordinate arrangements of policy, we are naturally led to advert to the means of improving those arts, upon which the subsistence and the comfort of human life immediately depend; and to promote which is the primary care of every good government.

Husbandry.

Of these the first, the most simple, the most important, is agriculture. It ministers most obviously and powerfully to the vigour of body and of mind. To it all the rest refer: from it they derive the materials of their operations. "What we call commodities," an ingenious author remarks, "is nothing but land severed from the soil. Man deals in nothing but earth. The merchants are the factors of the world, to exchange one part of the earth for another. The king himself is fed by the labour of the ox, and the clothing of

the army, and the tackling of the navy, must all be paid for to the owner of the soil, as the ultimate receiver. All things in the world are originally the produce of the ground, and there must all things be raised."

If agriculture be the nurse of the arts, she is also the parent of population, and the promoter of what is most estimable in human character, or important in the condition of human society. The labours of the field are calculated to breed a hardy, an athletic, and a temperate class of men. Without adopting the fanciful theory, that the heathen legends were altogether allegorical, we may be permitted to suppose, that the poets did not, without an important meaning, assign the culture of the earth as the appropriate employment of mankind during the golden age, the reign of peace, of innocence, and of happiness. No one can be ignorant of the influence of this occupation upon the ancient Romans, and how it conduced to the aggrandisement of the republic. Not only were her armies formed and recruited from the fields; her legislators, her generals, her dictators, were often called from the plough to preside in the senate, or lead forth the levies to victory, or save their country in the most perilous crisis. In our own country, no classes of the community are more respectable, independent, and en-

lightened, than the yeomen of England and the peasantry in Scotland. As they promote the fixed wealth, so they constitute a considerable portion of the aggregate wisdom, virtue, and valour of the nation.

Than Hindostan, no region on earth more powerfully invites, or more liberally rewards, the industry of the husbandman. Genial in climate, and rich in soil, its fertility has been proverbial from age to age. The Panjab in the interior, and the plains of the Ganges toward the coast, have been celebrated by all writers from classical times; and if, owing to the want of foreign commerce, or the fruitfulness of neighbouring kingdoms, India has not proved, like Egypt, the granary of the world, it may yet be entitled to the appellation bestowed upon it by Persian writers, "the paradise of nations." But, with all its natural advantages, the state of agriculture in this country is extremely rude. To this imperfection of the primary art of life, various causes have contributed. Necessity is the mother of invention; and it is not in countries which yield a plentiful produce almost spontaneously, but in those which are comparatively barren, and where the inhabitants are compelled to wring, by skill and industry, from niggard nature, the wealth she does not easily bestow; it is in the latter that the culture of

the soil has been carried to the highest degree of perfection. Britain, placed under a sky by no means propitious, and possessing a soil originally far from prolific, surpasses all the world in the arts of husbandry *. Besides, in India, the husbandman wants those encouragements to increasing exertion and ingenuity, which arise from a home consumption greater at all times than the supply, and from ready access to a near foreign market; the former of which incitements is always, and the latter is occasionally, felt in this country. Above all, the depressed condition of the peasantry †, who, by the impolitic arrangement of the casts, are herded together in the lowest class of society except one; the want of capital; the deductions made in kind by the proprietor and zemindar ‡, which, being undetermined, are ever liable to be raised; the inactive character of the nation; the simple manner in which the natives subsist; the privation of animal food enjoined by their superstition; the want of fences and roads; and the unsettled state of the country, have operated as obstructions to the progress of agriculture in Hindostan.

Some of these evils suggest their own remedy, and to

* Vide Note O. † Vide Note P. ‡ Vide Note Q.

others, expedients already proposed will apply. But to meet the case fully, additional measures will be necessary. Let the government shew that they hold the Ryot in high estimation, and that he possesses, in their view, an honourable rank among the members of the community. Let him be exempted, by a commutation in money, from those exactions in kind, which, wherever they may have existed, under whatever name, have still retarded the progress of agricultural improvement. Let him be encouraged with the sense of full security in holding his property, and the assurance of reaping the entire fruits of his labours. Let him be furnished also with those superior instruments of husbandry, suited to his soil and climate, which the skill of our agriculturists has invented. And, if some of the latter are invited, by adequate rewards, to settle in Hindostan, and teach the simple natives the use of these implements, together with the application of manures, the succession of crops, particularly the advantages of green crops, in short, the practical details of our husbandry, the happiest effects might ensue. With improvement, population, and home-consumption, the demand would all necessarily increase; and markets might be established, in various places, for the facilities of interchange or of sale. Premiums for superior ex-

cellence in the art, which, at a small expence, have, of late years, produced a wonderful rivalship, and a rapid improvement throughout this country, might also be proposed and awarded in a public and impressive manner. And, as the ancient Romans were accustomed to introduce into their system of warfare every military practice, or add to their own accoutrements every piece of armour, which they could borrow with advantage even from their enemies, so it could not be justly conceived as either derogatory to the wisdom, or beneath the dignity of a British governor, to imitate the example of the princes of Persia in former times, or of the emperor of China in our day, in bestowing an honourable notice upon the state of agriculture in his dominions, and conferring suitable rewards upon those who may attain eminence in an art of such national importance and utility. The historical relations of China mention a ceremony of opening the grounds, which the emperor performs every year. "The design of this public and solemn act, is to excite the people to tillage. Farther, the emperor is informed every year of the husbandman who has distinguished himself most in his profession, and he makes him a mandarin of the eighth order. Among the ancient Persians, the kings quitted their grandeur and pomp on the 8th day of the month called

Chorremruz, to eat with the husbandmen. Several of the kings of India," adds the author from whom this collection of facts is quoted, " also do the same, and Venty, the third emperor of the third dynasty, (in China) tilled the land himself, and made the empress and his wives employ their time in the silk works in his palace *."

Perhaps the encouragement and extension of agriculture in the present state of Hindostan may seem unnecessary, since the land easily produces enough to supply the inhabitants, and little is required for exportation. But it ought not to be forgotten, that a healthy and a virtuous populace constitute the real strength of a state, while it has already appeared, that the practice of this art is intimately connected with the energy of human character, and favourable to purity of manners, as well as to the first interests of society in other views; so that every facility given to its operations, every honour conferred upon those who excel in it, while it contributes to the respectability and happiness of the husbandman, will also promote, in an high degree, both the civilisation of the individual, and the improvement of the nation. The country is by no means so fully cultivated

* Mont. vol. i. book 14. ch. 8.

as it might be. According to recent accounts, a very considerable proportion of the whole territory is still in the rude state of nature, an unproductive and impenetrable jungle, the haunts of beasts of prey, and of all manner of noxious animals*. Owing at once to the unskilfulness and improvidence of the natives, famine, which, with a more judicious culture and better economy, might, in all ordinary cases, be easily prevented in a region so fertile, is far from being uncommon. Populous as it is, Hindostan, by reason of its defective agriculture, is not nearly so well peopled as China: but, as no axiom in mathematics can be more certain than this, that a country in time will people up to its resources; were the state of husbandry improved, the necessaries of life would increase, the population would be augmented, and, at the same time, the empire aggrandised. Though no such effects should be supposed to follow, yet if, by the superior skill of the labourer, and the improvement of his instruments, more work could be done, and the supports of existence reared with fewer hands, a greater proportion of the effective labour of the community might be transferred to other kinds of rural occupation, which are not at present

* Bapt. Mag. No. I. 74. According to the writer of the report, no less than one-sixth of the whole country is still in this state.

prosecuted to all that extent to which they may be carried. Among these we may mention the culture of silk, cotton, indigo, opium, sugar, and tobacco. More also of the skill and productive strength of the nation might be applied to the mechanic arts, and to the staple manufactures of the country.

The state of the latter, growing naturally and immediately out of the parent art, next claims our attention.

Other common arts.

That art which contributes to protect the human frame from the injury of the elements, forms the domestic circle, affords security to this most interesting society, and enables them in tranquillity to enjoy all the tender charities of life, cannot be considered as unimportant. But, in Hindostan, Architecture is confessedly in a rude state. Notwithstanding some magnificent monuments of its progress in former ages, exhibited in palaces, mausoleums, pagodas, and other public edifices, the general style of building is mean, and the huts of the peasantry are as miserable as can well be imagined. Far from roomy, lightsome, convenient, and healthful, they are constructed, in general, of the coarsest or slightest materials, combined in a rude and simple manner, without windows, or with frames without glass, frequently almost

Architecture.

without walls, low, confined, damp, and dark*. In some countries the want of suitable houses arises from the impracticability of obtaining materials to construct them; in others, not so much from this deficiency, as from unskilfulness in the arts of applying them. The latter is the case in India. 'Tis true, in a flat country, quarries of stone are not to be expected; but the mould and the climate afford everywhere the means of making bricks, and the forests supply abundance of timber, which is both uncommonly lasting and susceptible of a fine polish. To excite and assist the genius of the natives in improving these materials, workers in brick, house-carpenters, &c. might be invited, by the allotment of certain privileges, as well as by the prospect of great gains in their professional labours, to settle in Hindostan. For the sake of example, the buildings reared by the government, such as those that may be required, in various parts, for their auxiliaries in the great work of civilisation, or for the tenants upon their particular demesnes, should be of a superior kind. For encouragement, materials might be afforded in some cases gratis, or furnished, to a certain extent in all, free of expence; and premiums

* Dr Tennant, Ind. Recre. vol. i. 192, &c.

might be given to those who take the lead in this species of public improvement. After all, however, it is to the progress of public industry and opulence that we must look as the chief mean of creating a taste and exciting a spirit for this, as well as for the other elegances of life. One part of our own country may be adduced as an example. For ages the style of common building in Scotland continued nearly stationary; but at length, when the happy influence of the Union upon the peaceful arts of life began to be strongly felt, and trade had diffused a greater portion of wealth throughout the mass of the community, all ranks hastened to vie with one another in architectural improvement. Then those hovels, in which the lower orders had burrowed for ages, with their walls of mud, or turf, or unplastered stone, began to disappear: proprietors of lands contended with each other in the extent of those domestic accommodations, which were held out as an inducement to settle on their estates; and now, everywhere, the habitations of the tenantry are assuming the appearance, if not of elegance, yet of cleanness, of snug comfort, and of increased conveniency.

Ship-building.

That a similar result might be anticipated with sufficient confidence in India, may be inferred from the improvement

they have already made in the collateral art of naval architecture. Nothing could be more rude than the craft which formerly navigated their rivers, and the seas around their coasts; but, taught by British skill, the natives make excellent ship-wrights; and some of the finest vessels in our navy have been built in Hindostan. We have not yet availed ourselves fully of the naval resources of this most valuable acquisition. Were public docks and arsenals constructed in commodious places, those immense forests of teak with which this country, and especially the neighbouring kingdoms of Malacca and Siam abound, might be converted to much public utility. A portion of the overflowing population of this vast region might be advantageously employed to augment the bulwarks of our country: while the hardy oak of Britain is disappearing, an inexhaustible supply of a wood equally excellent might be procured from the eastern peninsula, or from Hindostan; and those sunderbunds which now deform the face of the latter in many districts, being cleared, might soon be converted into productive land, and adorned with the dwellings of a happy peasantry *.

Deficient in architecture, it cannot be expected that in

* Vide Note R.

some of the sister arts, whose productions increase the comforts of life, and adorn the interior of the habitation, the Hindoos should excel. For the manufactures of pottery, indeed, their country affords the principal material; but, although they fabricate earthen ware, yet they are far from having reached that variety, expedition, and elegance, which the artists of this country have attained *. Timber for the various kinds of cabinet and carpenter's work, of the most excellent qualities, they possess in abundance; but their tools are rude, and their workmen inexpert. In all the mechanic arts (except in a few solitary instances, such as in works of ivory and in the cutting of precious stones †,) they are greatly inferior, both in skill and execution, to the workmen of Europe. In these cases it is fitting that the natives should be enabled to avail themselves of the advantages which their country presents, and that they should be stimulated and aided by the superior ingenuity of British artisans. In some manufactures, however, they cannot be expected to attain eminence. Greatly destitute as their country is of the coarser metals, of tin, copper ‡, and iron, they can never hope to rival Britain in these important productions,

* Vide Note S. † Vide Note T. ‡ Vide Note U.

of which those are the materials, nor to carry to so high a degree of perfection most of the handicraft trades, the tools of which they supply. Yet let not the high-favoured inhabitants of India repine. Let them (amply endowed as they are) submit cheerfully to that wise and beneficent arrangement of Providence, which has ordained, that no country on earth should produce every single comfort and necessary of life, in such abundance or excellence as it may be found in some other region; and thus indicated the intention of heaven, that, by an exchange of commodities and the intercourse of commerce, mankind everywhere should cultivate union, and, urged by their common wants, incessantly minister to their mutual happiness. Let them avail themselves of the many valuable productions which their country so plentifully supplies, to trade in the general mart of nations, and bless the great commonwealth of mankind with an increase of the comforts of life. Let them apply assiduously to the cultivation of those commodities (the appropriate labour assigned them by Providence); and, while they enjoy their grain and fruits in such variety and abundance, with their sugar, their silk, their indigo, their cotton, their mines of diamonds, and fisheries of pearls, let them not envy other nations the advantages which may be derived from

more hardy, though less luxuriant crops; or from more useful, though apparently less valuable metals and minerals. Let them not grudge to barter a portion of their superfluous produce, for the more ingenious and effective tools which our artists prepare, or for those more elegant and complicated pieces of mechanism, which they are enabled to construct and execute, with singular beauty and accuracy. Thus, with able instructors, with improved tools and excellent models, Hindoo genius may approach nearer perfection in many of the mechanic arts *; and if in some, the scanty materials which nature affords continue to preclude competition, the natives of India, in return for those valuable exports which her superabundant bounty in other respects supplies, may furnish themselves amply from foreign markets, with whatever may minister to the comfort or to the elegance of domestic accommodations.

Whether the art of weaving †, and the manufacture of cottons, should be referred to the department of the mechanic arts, or of commerce, may be doubtful. On the one hand, this branch of labour is unquestionably conducted on the principles of mechanics, and accordingly might be rank-

* Vide Note X. † Vide Note Y.

ed among the handicraft trades: on the other, it forms, as every one knows, the principal export of India, and so may be classed under the head of commerce. Of the excellence of this production of the eastern loom, all the ladies of Europe, even in manufacturing countries, by their decided preference and panegyric, loudly testify*. Whence this superiority arises, considering the rude and simple manner in which the materials are prepared and put together, cannot be easily ascertained. A late writer † ascribes it to an extreme niceness of touch, which he imagines the Hindoo derives from the delicacy of his constitution, and the temperance of his habits. Two facts in the history of this envied production may convince us, that the fabric has not reached that height of excellence, or of expedition in the mode of its manufacture, which it might attain. Being fabricated chiefly in the rainy season, it is only an occasional job: and so simple is the machinery employed, that the workman erects his loom in the morning under the shade of a banyan, and in the evening takes it down and carries it home. The consequence is what might have been anticipated. The superiority of the results of this temporary and simple process,

* Vide Note Z.

† Dr Tennant.

consists, not in the fineness of the thread or the uniformity of the texture, (for in both these it is excelled by the British manufacture) but in circumstances, partly at least local and accidental, viz. the durability of the colour, and the elegant glossiness of the fabric. But if, with all the disadvantages under which he labours from an imperfect knowledge of machinery, the Indian manufacturer has obtained a preference for his muslins, even at a higher price, and in a far distant market, how unrivalled might be his practical excellence, how decided his commercial triumph, were he enabled to avail himself of all the advantages of European invention! Whether the British government ought, in sound policy, to assist him in attaining such an ascendancy, at the expence of an home manufacture, which employs so many useful hands, in which so much of the monied interest of the country is embarked, and which procures such returns from abroad, may justly "demand a doubt." Whether there could be found, among any considerable proportion of the natives, capital sufficient to embark in extensive undertakings, may also be doubted. But that situations for erecting spinning machinery could easily be found, in a country abounding with rivers, may be presumed; that the more perfect construction of the principal instrument of his la-

bours, agreeably to the mechanism of the British loom, would enable the Indian operative to rise to farther excellence in his art, must be obvious; and that, with a population so vast, labour so cheap, and workmen sober, temperate, industrious, and ingenious, the Gentoo manufacturer would soon be able, were his advantages equal, to undersell his British or European rivals, and drive them out of the market, cannot, it should seem, be for a moment controverted.

VI. Commerce derives her food from the arts, and nourishes them in her turn. Without commerce, an high degree of civilisation is not to be expected; and has rarely, if ever, been attained. By inspiring a sense of reciprocal wants, interests, and enjoyments, it strengthens the social principle: by opening intercourse with other nations, and shewing human nature in every variety of attitude, and under all circumstances of society, it liberalises the views of mankind: by discovering communities, at least in some respects, in a higher state of civilisation than ourselves, it at once enlightens and stimulates the spirit of improvement: by throwing around nations the ties of hospitality, of interest, of duty, it promotes the exercise of the principles of benevolence,

and binds them more closely together in the great political compact: by putting into operation a thousand forms of honest industry, it at once excites and rewards genius: by opening, for the lower orders of the community, a field of lucrative and useful employment, wide as the world itself, it diffuses wealth, and tends, both to exempt them from that spirit of servility which debases the common mind, and to inspire that feeling of honest independence which is favourable to public virtue, liberty, and valour: and, in fine, by all, it conduces, in a high degree, to polish society, and accelerate the improvement and happiness of the human race.

Commerce may be divided, most generally and obviously, into foreign and domestic. The latter consists, when altogether detached from the former, solely in the circulation of indigenous productions; and, even in the simplest times and most fertile country, since no man by his utmost exertions can supply himself with all he needs or may desire, must necessarily be carried to some extent. However, it is external commerce chiefly, that, while it quickens and extends the home trade, augments the fortunes of individuals, enriches the country, and promotes the improvement of its inhabitants.

The state of commerce among the Gentoos, as we have before remarked, is far beneath what the resources of the country might lead us to expect, and would easily support. To this mercantile depression, so unfriendly in many respects to the interests of the nation, various causes have contributed. He who would account for it, or prescribe appropriate remedies, must advert to the fertility of the country itself, which, by producing many of the luxuries, and all the necessaries of life, almost spontaneously, holds out a temptation to indolence; must advert to the passive, unaspiring, improvident, temper of the Hindoos, who, acquiescing in their present condition, and careless about futurity, are impelled by no anxieties, to acquire or accumulate the means of higher and remote gratification:—to the abstinence which their religion prescribes, and the simplicity of dress which their climate requires:—to the absence of a proper medium of exchange in some places, and of easy communication in others:—to general deficiency of capital, necessary especially for distant and expensive adventures:—to the total want of commodious and safe harbours, for vessels of any size, on the whole eastern line of coast from Trincomalee in Ceylon to Calcutta in Bengal:—to the cramping influence of the arrangement of the casts,

and to the laws founded on that arrangement:—and to that restrictive policy, which the government of a trading company usually adopts.

How is the influence of these causes to be counteracted, and the evils flowing from them to be removed or alleviated? To convert the Hindoos altogether into a trading nation, would neither be practicable nor expedient. But to create a spirit of manufacturing industry among the lower classes of the community; and to turn the attention of the higher orders (who, though not prohibited by law from following the profession, consider themselves as above commerce) to schemes of mercantile activity and enterprise, might prove highly conducive to the improvement of the national character. With this view, let the natives be encouraged to bring their commodities from the interior to the coast, by the assurance of inviolable protection, not only from robbery, but from arbitrary and undue exactions; as well as by the prospect of suitable gains, and a ready market. Let the communication with the inland parts, by removing obstructions in the course of the rivers by canals and by highways, be opened in all directions, as far as practicable. For the accommodation of inland traders, to preserve and protect their property until it can be disposed

of, let suitable depots, the use of which shall be subject to a moderate charge, be erected on the seat of the British factories in the interior, and on the coast, especially at shipping places. Besides the harbour of Bombay, which has been formed at considerable expence, let others be constructed, particularly one, if possible, on the long range of the eastern coast. In addition to these facilities, special privileges might be granted to the native merchants, extending their powers to trade on their own account; or certain immunities and honours of a less valuable, but perhaps not less stimulant kind might be conferred. Nor is it unworthy the attention of the Honourable East India Company to consider, whether it might not really be for their interest, having secured their own investments and a preference in the Indian market, to leave the trade in a great measure open, and to make at least certain ports free to neutral and friendly powers, or even to all British traders, to whatever extent, upon condition of paying a certain rate of impost for the privilege. In this manner some of the dependencies of other powers, particularly in the West Indies, have raised themselves to opulence and consideration: and, while the chartered rights of the Company were preserved inviolate, while all the shipping and capital they could command were employed on their

own account, would they not thus ensure a surplus revenue? Would not the only difference betwixt what they exported from India themselves, or allowed others to export, be, that, in the one case, they would draw their profits in Asia, in the other, they would realise them only in Europe? In truth, there are not wanting some who say strong and plausible things in favour of a trade altogether free, except for those limitations relative to the character and relations of the trading countries, and these checks with reference to all, which are necessary to the security of the Company's interests in that quarter of the world. "Has not the history of all ages," they argue, "proved that such commercial monopolies, when exclusively managed, have never succeeded in one instance? Have not other East India companies already fulfilled their destiny, and become insolvent? The reason is obvious. Such impolitic restrictions operate as injuriously upon those by whom they are imposed, as upon those against whom they are devised and enacted. "The spirit of commerce, like the spirit of liberty, claims to be unconstrained; and they who would 'crib and hem in' her free-born and expanding genius by coercive measures, act as unwisely as if they attempted to regulate the motions of the heart by an additional system of contraction,

or retard the current of the blood by new valves, or writhe the intestines into new contortions.) Provide solicitously against the entrance of disaffected foreigners into the country, or the dissemination of principles of faction and rebellion: secure adequate compensations for the privileges and accommodations conceded to the fair trader; but, having done this, all is done that ought to be attempted: the trade should be left, in other respects, entirely free. Were it thrown open, at least to all the subjects of the mother country, upon condition of their paying an equivalent to the Company, the latter would probably gain more by the increase of territorial revenue and of commercial impost, than by all the advantages which the present monopoly can confer. Confessedly, the Company cannot take off more than a third of the present produce of Hindostan, and why should the other two thirds be lost, by restrictions injurious at once to them, to Britain, and to India*? Individuals, it has always been remarked, manage their particular concerns more actively and economically than copartneries; and the observation applies with accumulated force to a commercial association, so extensive, and the grand scene

* See India House Debates on the Illicit Trade, in the Annual Asiatic Register for A. D. 18[illegible].

of whose concerns lies so remote, as that of the East India Company. The market of Hindostan being open to the fair trader at a reasonable rate, no temptation would be held out to that illicit trade*, which, in similar circumstances, and there is reason to believe even in this case, has intercepted much of that profit, which would otherwise have been reaped by the Company and by the State. By the increased energy, ingenuity, and competition of the Indian manufacturer, the country market would be lowered; and the commodities being sold, in Europe and in Britain, at a cheaper rate, the demand would be augmented: two objects, which it is the aim of political economy to unite, and which, were they gained, by dismissing speculation would render the trade both more securely gainful to the merchant, and more extensively beneficial to the public. Grateful, too, for the generosity of their new masters, easy and happy under a benign administration, raised in the scale of nations by an enlightened and liberal policy, the Hindoos would rally around the English government, and, cordially attached to the new order of things, would form their own barrier; so that the present expensive armaments, naval and

* Vide Note AA.

military, which are necessary to the security of the empire, would become, in a great measure, superfluous. Add to all: the pleasure of having infused a new spirit into many millions of the human race, and conferred on them more ample means of happiness; the satisfaction of having raised an amiable people high in the scale of civilised society, would be enjoyed by those who have concurred in adopting a policy so wise and noble: and these are some of the first and purest joys that a good and generous heart can feel." Such is the spirit and tendency of many reasonings *, which have been held on this or similar topics; but it is the less necessary, at present, to inquire whether they be conclusive, because that day is probably distant, when the subject can be agitated with propriety in its fullest extent; and because the preceding suggestions, if they are carried into effect, may meanwhile be useful in progressively ameliorating the circumstances of the Hindoos, as a commercial people, and in lessening, although they may not altogether obviate, the evils attached to their present condition. Thus may we "establish, under a just and benignant system of internal administration, the prosperity of our finances and com-

* By Dr A. Smith, B. Franklin, &c.

merce, on the solid foundations of the affluence, happiness, and confidence of a contented and grateful people*."

VII.

Revenue is an object of the first importance with interested governments: but we trust it will be at all times only a subordinate consideration with that one, whose majestic march, in the career of true glory, we have been feebly endeavouring to delineate and to guide. As operations of finance belong to the legislative and executive powers of government, we might have introduced this section under the fourth department in the detail, but, since the resources of revenue arise from lands, arts, and commerce, which we have but just considered, the position for which we have reserved it may seem not improper.

Than pecuniary exactions, none other have been usually imposed with less ceremony, or with more coarse rapacity, in most countries; but there are none, which, in a nation that the legislator would raise to wealth and power, require to be managed with a more delicate and gentle hand: none, to devise and apportion which, demands greater knowledge of human nature, or of the various relations of commerce

* Marquis of Wellesley's Address to the Students of Calcutta College.

and of society. Taxation, according to the different modes in which it is conducted, may either, by conciliating confidence and augmenting the resources of a people, confirm their attachment and promote their improvement in a high degree, or, by infusing prejudices and exciting rebellion, may greatly obstruct, if not altogether prevent, the attainment of ends so desirable. Of the latter part of this position, the history of many states affords mournful examples: the former is obvious, and requires no illustration.

The revenue of the British possessions in India, as has been already noticed, is ample, but fluctuating, and, therefore, not capable of being exactly ascertained. In consequence of the new acquisitions, by which our empire has been so much enlarged, new cares and new duties devolve upon the government. Of these, beside the arrangement of the details of political organisation and military defence, the chief is, the imposition, the collection, and the application of such levies, as may at once support the general establishment of a new system of administration, and be made subservient to the civilisation of the people thus annexed to the British dominions.

On the subject of taxation, the following maxims seem founded in reason, deducible from the experience of past

ages, and not inapplicable to our object. Indirect taxes are preferable to those that are direct. Impositions on the necessaries of life, to be consumed in the country, or upon the raw material, in any branch of domestic manufacture; or such as are calculated to operate as a discouragement upon any rising art, particularly upon the national staple, are highly inexpedient. Arbitrary assessments, whatever name they bear, (forced loans, general aids, public contributions, &c.) except when intended as penalties, and understood to be such, ought to be avoided: because they both irritate the feelings, insult the judgment, exhaust the resources of a country, and, at the same time, afford the assessors easy opportunities of oppressing the subject, for their own emolument,—of putting, without the fear of detection,

> " Into their overgorged and bloated purse
> The wealth of 'pillaged' provinces."

Those taxes which are most obvious in their grounds, and most easily defined in their extent, are usually least felt, most easily collected, and most productive. Levies, accompanied with their own palpable equivalent, such as tolls,

tonnage, harbour-dues, and premiums for mercantile privilege, when moderate, are least burdensome, and least obnoxious. The mode of farming the revenue, which an indolent or avaricious government has always been prone to adopt, if it be the most energetic and apparently the most frugal, is also the most oppressive to the subject, and the most hazardous to the empire. A rising country ought to be more lightly taxed from the beginning, even in proportion to what it can bear, than one that has been long flourishing; whose strength has been tried; whose resources have been accumulating; and whose constitution, peradventure, has been consolidated by the very pressure of such incumbrances. Though every government be entitled to liberal compensation for the superintendence and protection extended to its subjects, yet no government has a right to appropriate to its own individual or foreign concerns, those funds which have been raised in a country, if the latter be not at the same time admitted to a participation, as entire as its circumstances will allow, of the benefits of the political compact. In conducting the financial concerns of a country, so extensive and wealthy as Hindostan; a country into which the treasures of the West have been long flowing in a copious stream; where the Company have acquired im-

mense territories and revenues, by the subjugation or cession of the native states; and where the people are so mild and so unresisting, there can be neither difficulty in procuring funds for all the necessary exigencies of government, nor necessity for having recourse to violence in raising them. Let then the rate of taxation be comparatively low from the first, and rise with the rising prosperity of the country. Let the government demonstrate, that they have other and higher ends in view, than pecuniary interest or selfish aggrandisement. Let the servants of the Company be watched with scrupulous solicitude in their fiscal operations; and, by avoiding a penuriousness equally unjust and unwise on the part of their employers, by a liberality of provision which may be worthy of the grandeur of the eastern empire, let all temptations to peculation be removed. Let the subject know exactly, what rates he has to pay; and, when aggrieved, let him not be resigned to the discretion of his oppressor, or to any mode of adjudication in which the latter shall have an undue influence, but have easy access to a tribunal of inquiry and redress, cheap, public, impartial, and expeditious.

In this way the British government will wipe away those foul imputations that have been cast upon her administra-

tion in the East; will approve her genuine character of humanity, of wisdom, of liberality; and will provide at once for her own support, and for the improvement of the natives.

VIII. Since what have been called the Fine Arts flourish chiefly in a state of freedom, of opulence, and of refinement, commerce, which, while it polishes the manners, diffuses the means of enjoyment, will hold out encouragements to their cultivation; and a state of liberty and comfort, which is intimately connected with a wise and liberal policy in revenue, must be favourable to their improvement. And, affording an elegant entertainment; exhibiting excellent models of refinement, in a way the most impressive; withdrawing mankind from the grosser occupations of life, to dwell on the melting emotions of the heart, to accompany the sublime flights of imagination, or to inhale the pure and enrapturing spirit of devotion, these arts, Poetry, Music, Painting, and Sculpture, do, in their turn, minister highly to civilisation *.

The Gentoos have exhibited respectable specimens of

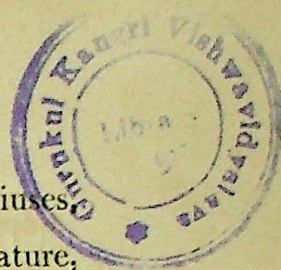
* Vide Note BB.

proficiency in the first of these arts: but they are few; inferior to the productions of some other nations, particularly to the classical models of Greece and Rome; and, trespassing often against the laws of simplicity, are incorrect in the taste they display. In music* and painting they have not excelled, as far as we yet know: and the monuments of their sculpture, corresponding to the ideas of their superstition, betray a conception unnatural and fantastic in a high degree.

To refine their taste on such subjects, to furnish them with more unexceptionable and excellent models, to multiply and sublimate their means of intellectual and moral pleasure, to elicite the latent fires of Hindoo genius, and mingle them with the corruscations of British talent, will be no mean or useless project. But how are these noble ends to be accomplished? One obvious expedient is, to transfer the more admired productions of foreign countries, and especially of ancient times, to Hindostan. And were the works of the celebrated masters of antiquity, for ex-

* As a practical art we mean: for while the venerable antiquarian to whom we have often referred admits, that although they call music "the language of the Gods," they are poor performers; he also affirms his belief, that their system of music, as a science, was formed on finer principles than our own.

ample of Homer and of Virgil, naturalised, by being clothed in an Indian dress, what new sources of enjoyment would be opened to the natives! Were the poems of our celebrated countrymen, of Milton, of Shakespeare, of Cowper, and of Thomson, the children of sensibility, of genius, and of piety, translated into the language of the East; or were the Hindoos taught to understand them in their original tongue, what pure and refined pleasure might they taste! Yet it may be presumed, that productions of their own artists in every branch, being more congenial to their spirit, would operate a more powerful effect upon the public mind. By the transference of these illustrious models, therefore, and by other incitements, pecuniary academical and political, let it be the peculiar care of government (what has never yet been attempted in any due degree) to draw forth the ebullitions of native genius. And be it remembered, that genius is a plant of delicate frame and culture. In vain shall the fiat of despotism bid it arise. The tender flower will shrink from the touch of the iron rod, from the breath of the tyrant. The nurseling, if not of liberty alone, yet of love and of imagination, it can be reared only by means congenial to its noble delicacies, by the gentle dews and the soft sunshine of heaven. It is about the throne of the fos-

tering parent of the arts, that groupes of immortal geniuses, the illustrious ornaments of the age and of human nature, have arisen. The powerful influence which a generous and enlightened ruler sheds around him, attracts the bright constellation, and they gladly embellish his train, and follow in his career of glory. Let, then, the governor-general of India be the Mæcenas of his empire, and an Augustan age will succeed. Let him imitate that munificent patronage, of which the annals of his royal master afford so many bright examples, and the irradiation of eastern talent will shed lustre on his administration also: the luxurious regions of India will emulate the classical scenes of Greece and of Rome: the names of Mornington and Cornwallis, the streams of Ganges and of Indus, will be given to the deathless song: and that gentle and contented race, over whom he presides, will become still more refined and happy.

The elegant arts are of the same family with the sciences. The same circumstances are favourable or adverse to both: they either rise and are improved, or they decline and fall together. The arts are the organs of science: science is the illuminator of the arts. Science fixes, embodies, expresses herself in the arts: they, on the other hand, derive from her taste, impression, and immortality.

Nothing, it is obvious, can have a more direct or powerful influence upon civilisation than science. She illuminates the mind, refines the taste, ameliorates the heart, polishes the manners. She furnishes us with new motives to piety; with new views of human nature, and of the relations of human society; with new sources of sublime gratification; with new and excellent means of improvement.

In Hindostan, those means of improvement have been hitherto scanty. Confined to some astronomical calculations, founded upon principles which are no longer understood; to certain historical and mythological legends and chronologies, remarkable chiefly for their extravagant claims to high antiquity, and their meagre details of facts; and to a code of laws, excellent indeed upon the whole, but dictated, in many instances, by the selfish spirit of a predominant sect, it is easy to conceive how ill calculated they are to illuminate the public mind. Ignorant of the true theory of the universe, in some at least of its grand bearings; of geography, to an astonishing degree; of natural and experimental philosophy, in its several divisions; of the science of mind; of the mathematical speculations, so high and so useful; of political economy, in a great measure; of all the invaluable information, of ancient and of modern erudition;

of the history of man, and of foreign countries; in short of almost all that deserves the name of science, and which it imports man most to know,—how little comparatively do they possess*! But, scanty as are these means of information, to the great body of the people they are inaccessible. Written in a dead language, and committed to the custody of one tribe alone, these sacred guardians, as might be expected, watch over this their exclusive prerogative with jealous care, and contend, as others have done, that these mysteries ought not to be profaned by being subjected to vulgar intrusion. Accordingly, all travellers concur in representing the common race of Hindoos as among the most unenlightened of mankind. If their manners be soft, they have not been mollified by the genial influence of science. If their spirit be gentle, it is not owing to the illuminating instructions of their appointed teachers.

The means of remedying these defects are simple and obvious, though to organise them may not be easy, and their operation must necessarily be slow. At this moment a seminary for teaching our countrymen, in Britain, the knowledge of the spoken languages of Hindostan, with accounts

* "It must be admitted," says Sir William Jones, "that the Asiatics, if compared with our western nations, are mere children in science."

and mathematics, is projected; and, if carried into effect, may contribute in some degree to the diffusion of science. But to erect and endow schools and academies, in suitable places throughout our eastern possessions, to which able teachers, natives or Europeans, may be appointed, and by which the knowledge of the arts and sciences may become accessible to all our eastern subjects, is an expedient, more direct and efficient, which will readily suggest itself to every one on first consideration. How these seminaries are to be supported, whether by the contributions of the students, or the aids of the state, or by both together; and, if the interposition of the second be necessary, whether the Braminical colleges might not be so occupied, and their ample revenues transferred altogether, or at least in part, to the support of this more important national object,—are questions, which cannot be decided without a minute knowledge of circumstances local and political, and of which the determination must rest with the wisdom of the governors. Since the lands of the priests are not only entailed upon the order, and considered as sacred by the people, but exempted from taxation; it is probable any attempt to alienate or assess them, would, at least for a time, be highly obnoxious, if not greatly hazardous. In addition to these institutions,

endowed as may seem most expedient, much aid may be derived from the art of printing. Every one knows how much the press has contributed, in latter ages, to the improvement of Europe, and the illumination of the world. Let then small British tracts, especially those that indicate the state of society in Europe, in its most pleasing and instructive views, be published in the native languages. Or, to encourage the study of the English, and thus, the more effectually to incorporate the natives with their rulers, these treatises may be retained in their original dress. By these means, besides diffusing useful information, such a habit of reading and reflection may be created, as will contribute to relieve the languors of life, to stir up the mental indolence of the Hindoos, and engage them to concur in the salutary views of government. This is no new scheme. It has been already tried. The annals of Hindostan present us with an illustrious precedent. Abker, one of the best emperors that ever sat on the throne of the East, ordered his Vizier, Abul Fazel, to translate into a familiar style the Hœtopades, or Amicable Instructor, (a book of great celebrity) that his subjects might be improved by the lessons on science and on ethics which it contained.

IX. We have reserved the consideration of Morals for this last section of the first part of our Inquiry, both because of its supreme importance to the community, and of its indispensable necessity to perfect civilisation. Without morality man can never reach the true dignity of his nature, or fulfil the duties of his station in society with sufficient honour and advantage. Without it he cannot be so excellent, so amiable, or so useful. Nations indeed may be pointed out, the exterior of whose manners is most pleasing, while the state of their morals is the most degraded. But who would say that their state of improvement is the highest; that they admit of no amelioration; that their character is not essentially defective? The face of their society resembles the green but deceitful quagmire, not the firm and fertile field. The polish of their manners reminds us of the superior parts of the sphinx; the pravity of their morals, may be compared to the temper and hinder parts of that hideous monster.

A stranger who should survey for the first time the morals of the Hindoos, or he who, with opportunities of more exact investigation, should examine them superficially, might be led to conclude, that no nation on the face of the earth was more civilised in this respect, than that harmless, assi-

duous, temperate, and obliging race of men. For, in whatever relates to the exterior of conduct, they are excelled by none; scarcely, perhaps, rivalled by any. Their love of their country, their patient industry, and their implicit submission to the constituted authorities, are all conspicuous. But a more attentive and intimate consideration will compel us to form a different conclusion. The morality of the Gentoos is deficient, both in extent and in principle. Free from the turbulence of passion, and the fever of ambition, they are often, it is said, tormented by the stings of jealousy, the natural consequence of the voluptuousness of the climate, combined with the prevalence of a loose morality; and still more frequently actuated by avarice, than which no vice, when it has once obtained the ascendancy, possesses the soul more fully, reigns with a more debasing sway, or hardens the heart with a more malignant influence. Besides these evil tempers, many crimes, as we have already noticed, are almost universally prevalent. They have no perfect standard of morals; none that is free from superstition, dignified in its motives, and not defective in its prescriptions*. They have no idea of sanctity beyond that

* Vide Note CC.

which is derived from corporeal ablutions; nor any conception of the necessity of a more powerful remedy for the guilt of sin than pilgrimages, devotions, and penances. If they appear to possess some of the virtues, yet these are never unmingled: their humanity is tarnished by many superstitious cruelties; their gentleness by many frightful orgies. And of other virtues of a higher order and more difficult attainment, which require vigour and fire of soul; of the principles of an elevated philanthropy, of active heroism, and of a noble generosity, such as Christianity would inspire, they are at once ignorant and destitute.

For correcting these evils, and exalting the moral character of the Hindoos, we shall in vain look to the Bramins. Panegyrised as they have been by some partial philosophers in the West, their characters are often stained with enormities, even the most unnatural and infamous *. Among Christians, many know and approve the right while they do the wrong; but these sophists are not less ignorant of the principles of true morality, than incapable of exemplifying them in their own deportment. Recourse must be had to adventitious aids. The translation and dispersion of treatises, in-

* Asiatic Researches, vol. iv. 336. and vol. v. 372.

culcating purer ethics, and explaining the genuine principles of moral science, may be highly useful. Academies or schools, instituted partly or solely for this purpose, might contribute greatly to rectify and enlarge the views of the natives, on this most interesting subject. Illustrious examples of virtue in their rulers, would powerfully co-operate in promoting their reformation. But we must confess, that we look for the grand, decisive influence, which shall regenerate the manners of this engaging people, only to the diffusion of the Scriptures, and the prevalence of Christianity.

Reason, without revelation, is insufficient to renovate the human character, or reform the world. In support of an assertion so mortifying to the pride of human understanding, I appeal to the experience of ages, to the history of the world. The whole human race, except one secluded and despised people, were consigned to reason and philosophy for four thousand years: but did the nations improve in virtue under their uncontrouled tuition? Where did these instructors of mankind add to the rolls of goodness one real virtue, that conscience or feeling had not previously inscribed thereon? Or where did they expunge one seeming virtue from the catalogue of human excellences? Where did they raise the standard of morals, or reform any degenerate

people? They might attempt to delineate the character of a perfect man; but were not their descriptions at once discordant and defective? And who, even of their most admired philosophers, can be supposed to have realised the lovely image? Is not the character of each stained with some degrading superstition, or still more debasing vice? And, in short, did not philosophy lend her aid, the aid of her example, of her instructions, of her laws, to uphold the established superstitions, which, by many of their rites, and by all their spirit, tended to dissever religion from morality, to enfeeble the influence of virtue, and, in instances not a few, to sanctify impurity?

On the other hand, for how many improvements in morality and civilisation have Europe and the world been indebted to Christianity? It is this divine and ennobling religion that has mitigated the horrors of war, lightened the bonds of captivity, loosened the chains of the slave, enacted a humane and improved law of nations; that has inculcated a purer system of ethics, raised the tone of public opinions, and the standard of morals; that has illuminated the public mind, refined the public taste, and carried learning with her in her train; that has kindly lent her aid to the dictates of conscience, and given virtue such an ascendancy,

that vice either shrinks from the view, or clokes herself under the assumed garb of this high arbitress; that has given full scope to the exercise of human sympathies, and adorned Europe, and especially our favoured island, with innumerable merciful institutions, adapted to alleviate the various miseries of man; that has attempered the power of the great, raised the condition of the poor, polished the manners of Europe, and contributed, in the highest degree, to civilise the world. "Why do we no longer behold around us the horrors of ferocious barbarism, or degrading superstition; the impious obscenities of idolatry, and the afflicting miseries of unmitigated slavery; the ravages of merciless cruelty, altars stained with human gore, or funerals resounding with the groans of butchered gladiators?" exclaims an animated advocate of Christianity. "It is because at the commanding aspect of our holy religion these abominations have evanished. Why are infants no longer exposed to capricious destruction from unfeeling parents? Why are parents now secure from the snares and the murderous designs of ambitious sons? Why are servants now protected from the tyranny and tortures of inhuman masters? Why is the wife now respected in her age, and

not capriciously dismissed to make room for the seducing wanton, or tortured with the insolence of rival concubines? What has exalted the whole female sex to respectability, to deference, to love? Unquestionably it was Christianity. No system of philosophy before its appearance ever produced such effects, or even attempted such designs*."

Such has been the influence of the religion of Jesus upon the manners of mankind, and so indispensably necessary is its propagation, to the introduction and ascendancy of a perfect system of morals in any country. Without the knowledge of the gospel, the principles of morality cannot be so pure, or its spirit so high; its motives cannot be so sublime, or its particular illustrations so faultless and engaging; its sanctions cannot be so solemn, or its influence so commanding and benign. How wonderful must be the power of this divine system of goodness, when, even in its feeblest and most defective state, it can operate such effects as those to which we have briefly adverted! And, if among the nations of Europe such benefits attend its most exceptionable forms, proceed from its indirect influence, what ex-

* Bennet's Sermon on Christian Morality.

tensive and auspicious effects might it not be expected to produce, on the state of individual, domestic, social, and political manners and happiness, were it propagated planted and felt in any country, in its scriptural purity and genuine efficacy!

It is then of the last importance to mankind that Christianity be universally diffused.

This introduces the second and most elevated department of our Inquiry, viz.

PART II.

WHAT ARE THE BEST MEANS OF DIFFUSING THE LIGHT OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION THROUGHOUT THE EASTERN WORLD?

And this part of the Disquisition, in consideration of the diversity of means which the Honourable the East India Company, or the British nation, have access to employ for the propagation of our holy religion, in each case, divides itself into two questions: First, What are the means which may be employed to diffuse Christianity throughout the British empire in Hindostan? And, Secondly, What methods may be farther adopted to spread the light of the Gospel through the East?

I.

To form some idea of the necessity which exists for attempting to introduce Christianity into Hindostan, and of the nature of the means which may be adopted for accomplishing this holy enterprise, it may be expedient to begin with taking a survey of the Religion of the country.

Bramanism.

The present religion of Hindostan is a system of Paganism, more venerable for its antiquity, and more interesting for its peculiarities, than almost any other in ancient or modern times.

History.

If the opinions of persons of much research and reflection are to be received, this alone, however, of all the institutions of India, has undergone important alterations. First, the pure primeval religion degenerated into idolatry; and next, about the 12th century, the worship of Boodh, who is still adored in the eastern peninsula, was exchanged in the western for that of Brahma, the present superstition of the Gentoos *.

Theory.

Their theoretic system is founded upon the assumption of the existence of one invisible, immortal, omnipresent, almighty, and most excellent Being †. But, actuated by those fears of guilt which are natural to sinful man, and ig-

* Maurice. Jones.

† Jones's Works. Halhed's Pref. &c.

norant of the benevolent character of that supreme Intelligence, who presides over the affairs of our race and the destinies of the universe; they imagine that he is too pure and too high to be approached or addressed immediately by men on the earth. Accordingly, like all other pagan nations, they have introduced a class of inferior beings to mediate betwixt them and the Most High. Among the superior divinities, three, Brahma, Vishna, and Sheva*, are conceived to be pre-eminent. As superstition proceeds upon no fixed principles, and the vagaries of imagination are endless, so the Debtahs, or inferior deities of Hindostan, like the gods and goddesses of Greece and Rome, are innumerable. Emulating, or far surpassing the prolific polytheism of other Gentiles, it is reported that the demigods of India amount to thirty crore †. The history of these intelligences is similar throughout all nations: a motley tissue of what is mean and great, good and vicious, in human character and conduct ‡. All their deities are worshipped under the form of idols. Some of their most learned Bramins

* Encyc. Brit. Art. Hindostan.

† Edin. Review, No. VIII. A crore is 10,000,000. Ayeen Acbery, vol ii. Art. Numeration.

‡ Vide Note DD.

(like the sophists of other superstitious systems which admit similar practices) would persuade us, that these are intended, not as objects of adoration, but as excitements to devotion; but it is unquestionable, that the common people, and even the majority of the Bramins, have no such refined views*. Of these images every house is a mint, every artisan a fabricator; and nothing can be either more rude, fantastic, and monstrous, than the forms under which deity is exhibited, or more unceremonious than the manner in which their idols are often treated. Worshipped with much ardour in the morning, and thrown into the pond or the river in the evening, is not unfrequently the short and eventful history of their deification. The Hindoos believe that God is the enlivening Spirit of the universe, in such a sense as that all beings derive from his immediate agency in them, not only the continuance of their existence, and their physical powers of action, but also all the principles and impulses of their conduct, evil as well as good. Hence they account every man an integral part of the Divinity; imagine that he does nothing but what God does; and hold that he is not responsible for his crimes. In the sanctify-

* Bapt. Acc. vol. i. p. 138.

ing virtue of the waters of the Ganges they fully confide; and, such is the simplicity of their minds, that, without giving themselves the trouble of feigning celestial beings resident in the river, they worship, with various rite, the stream itself. Like the ancient Egyptians, they entertain a high veneration for some of the irrational animals, particularly the cow and the ox*. This regard may be supposed to proceed partly from gratitude; but its want of discrimination shews, that it chiefly arises from their belief of the doctrine of transmigration, so prevalent in the East. They imagine that the soul survives the body; and, upon quitting its present envelope, to be purified from its pollutions or punished for its crimes, is compelled to animate, in a certain series, such of the inferior creatures as are most congenial in character to its former propensities, until, refined from the dregs of corruption, it is fitted for its appropriate station in paradise†. Only in some very rare instances of transcendent goodness is the spirit supposed to be spared

* Maurice's Mod. Hindostan, Introd. p. 4.

† At Brahma's stern decree, as ages roll,
New shapes of clay await th' immortal soul;
Darkling, condemned in forms obscene to prowl,
And swell the midnight melancholy howl.

this painful process, and honoured with an immediate admission into the presence of Brahma. Of heaven they enumerate six regions: of hell, seven. Into the highest heavens, the residence of Brahma, none but the first favourites of divinity are at all admitted. They believe that the sufferings of hell will not be eternal; and that all, after a certain course of purification and of punishment, proportioned to the degrees of their moral turpitude, will be conducted to the land of blessedness.

Ritual.

Such are some of their speculative opinions in theology. Their practical piety corresponds to their theoretic belief. With the simplest rites, and in the rudest manner, their deities are worshipped by this artless people. Without any religious obeisance, a small portion of food is set before the idol, or some prayers and ablutions are performed. Many, however, are very cruel to themselves, and imagine that their voluntary tortures are acceptable to heaven. One class of devotees, called Faquirs, are the most rigid of ascetics, and submit to mortifications that are almost incredible *. They amount in number, it is said, to an hundred and ten thousand; and, traversing the country in bands, become

* Bapt. Acc. vol. i. pp. 28. 59. 172, &c.

extremely formidable to the unarmed inhabitants, and commit many excesses, some of which are represented as totally incompatible with their apparent self-denial and sanctity*.

Sacred books.

The mythology of the Hindoos is prescribed in the VEDAS. These Vedas (or Beids) consist of four volumes, which are said to have issued from the four mouths of Brahma, and contain the history of their nation, the records of their religion, the institute of their polity, and the precepts of their morality. They are composed in Shanscrit, a language which is no longer spoken in India, but is mentioned in terms of high encomium by several of our countrymen who have been instructed in it†, and seems, like the Latin in Europe, to enter deeply into many of the dialects of the East. To give the contents of the sacred volumes a firmer hold of the mind and heart, they are thrown into measured prose, and divided into one hundred thousand ashlogues or stanzas. So high do the Bramins carry their veneration for these repositories of religious information, that they account it profane for the vulgar to read them, or even to hear them read; and, like the ancient scribes, the learned commit

* Col. Dow's History of Hindostan.

† Sir William Jones, Mr Halhed, Colonel Dow.

much of them to memory with exact and elaborate care. Upon these sacred books, which they believe to have been written millions of years ago, there are many volumes of commentaries, entitled Shasters, which are also held in much esteem by the natives, and studied by the Bramins. Of these shasters there are two of chief consideration, the Bedang and Neadirsen, which, coinciding in the fundamental doctrine of a supreme God, disagree in some other tenets, and divide the Hindoos into two great religious sects. Those who reside on the Malabar and Coromandel coasts and in the Deccan, adhere to the former: they who inhabit Bengal and the provinces to the west and north, have preferred the latter *.

Sects

Like all false religions established in a wealthy country, displaying the pride of the human heart, and preposterously attempting to embellish the solemnity of worship by the garnishings of art and the glare of riches,—the superstition of Hindostan boasts of a magnificent institution. Rude as are their images, and simple as are their offerings, their places of worship are frequently splendid, and the whole system is extravagantly endowed. Who has not heard of

established.

* Colonel Dow.

the stupendous excavations in the isle of Elephanta and of Salsette? And one temple in the Deccan is said to have once maintained forty thousand priests and females *.

Function-aries.

The ministers of religion, under the most ancient institution, were called Boodhis or Brachmans: under the modern establishment, they are denominated Bramins. They are extremely numerous, and, like the Levites amongst the Jews, divided into those who officiate at the altar, and those who have no sacred function. The former are also far more venerated than the latter; but these also have their dignity, for, though they engage themselves as secretaries, soldiers, &c. yet, with a most fastidious inconsistency founded upon the imaginary sanctity and legal pre-eminence of their order, they would account it pollution to eat even with their princes.

Influence upon public manners.

The superstition of this country, like that of ancient Greece and Rome, is calculated in several views to have a very unfavourable influence upon the morals of the people. The sacred books indeed contain a system of ethics, which, to our surprise, embodies those two grand precepts: "Love your enemies, and do to others as you would they should

* Orme's Hist. vol. i. p. 178.

do to you;" and, upon the whole, considered merely a scheme of rules, is excellent. But this code is little known, and feebly inculcated, either by the instructions or the lives of the Bramins. And, since it is believed that not man but God sins when the former does evil;—that the waters of the Ganges can purify the soul;—that it is meritorious to expose aged parents and friends, or even to accelerate their death, by choking them with the mud of the sacred river;—and that prostitution may, in certain cases, be an acceptable homage to Divinity, it is easy to perceive how far this system, in its principles and rites, tends to undermine the interests, and to efface the impressions of humanity and morality.

Unsocial spirit.

One peculiarity in the religion of the Hindoos deserves, on this subject, to be particularly noticed. More exclusive than any other system of superstition, it admits of no accessions. Even the economy of the Jews, although committed to one people, and limited in its solemnities of worship to one spot, was open to the reception of proselytes from the Gentiles, and cherished an ardent zeal for the illumination and conversion of all other nations. But the religion of Hindostan, claiming an high antiquity and a divine origin, is altogether unsocial. Partaking of the

gloomy spirit of the cast, according with the illiberal genius of the whole Hindoo polity, but repugnant to the feelings of true benevolence, the system of Brama sternly interdicts all religious intercourse with the rest of mankind, and indignantly repulses their approaches to association.

Christianity.

With pleasure we turn from this absurd and selfish superstition to the contemplation of OUR HOLY RELIGION, which is a ministration of the most exalted truth, and, as celebrated in the song of angels, breathes " good-will to men." And with no vain triumph, we may proceed to contrast the scheme of Christianity with this splendid and imposing, but unsocial and immoral institute of Paganism.

General view.

By the former we understand *revealed religion*, especially as it refers to that method of salvation through Jesus Christ, which constitutes the gospel of the grace of God, and is most clearly propounded in the New Testament.

Theory.

Assuming the information of natural religion, the suggestions of common sense and common feeling concerning the existence and attributes of Divinity, besides correcting, confirming, and enlarging those intuitive or acquired notices of heavenly things, which constitute what has been called natural religion, she adds to them her own supernatural and

singular but not incongruous, discoveries. In common with the religion of Brahma, Christianity holds the unity of the Godhead; but she connects with this the mysterious yet animating doctrine of Trinity, which, pervading the whole system, gives life and interest to every part. The character in which she represents the only object of worship, is at once most sublime and condescending, most venerable and alluring, most glorious and generous, altogether immaculate, yet most propitious to sinful man. Let us hear her delineations. "He sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grashoppers before him: he stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in. He hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heaven with his span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. Behold the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and counted as the small dust of the balance; behold he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering. Yet, thus saith the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a humble and contrite spirit,

to revive the spirit of the humble and the heart of the contrite ones. For his name is, the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." But, at once to illustrate the benignity of his character, to obtain satisfaction to his justice, and ascertain the hopes of fallen and helpless man, we are told, that " God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life." And more clearly to develope the scheme of salvation, it is added, that " All have sinned and come short of the glory of God; but we are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth as a propitiation, (or expiatory sacrifice for sin) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness in the remission of sins, that he might be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus."

Distinguishing character.

The glorious peculiarity of our holy religion is the mediation of Jesus Christ: the interposition, the atonement, and the intercession of the great God our Saviour, on behalf of our degenerate race. These are the characteristic discoveries of Christianity. These give a noble interest to its

facts, dignity to its doctrines, force to its precepts, and significancy to its institutions. It may be viewed in various relations, but in all there is a perpetual recurrence to Christ and his cross. Consider the Gospel as a compilation of facts, and is not the account given of "God made manifest in the flesh," its grand historical peculiarity? Consider the Gospel as a system of theoretic truth, and Jesus is the basis of the whole; for are not the Godhead and the mediation of Christ, the sum of its high discoveries? Is not "Christ crucified," "the truth as it is in Jesus," its glorious summary, its distinguishing doctrine? Consider the Gospel as a scheme of salvation; and does it not unfold, through the interposition of the Son of God on our behalf, vicarious sufferings, a surety-righteousness, and redemption entirely of divine generosity *. Consider the Gospel as a ministration of experimental piety, and Jesus Christ, with the great truths concerning his death, are the vital spirit of our religion; for, realised by faith, they become the food of the enlightened mind, the solace of the renovated spirit: "His flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed." Consider the Gospel as an institute of religious service, and, throughout the whole economy, Christ and his

* 2 Cor. v. 21. Eph. i. 7, &c.

death are exhibited; in all our devotions we are instructed to have recourse invariably to his mediation and grace. Consider the Gospel as a practical code, and you will be convinced that Christ is entitled to give the name to our religion, because he both confers upon his people the principles and the powers of new obedience, and presents them, in his own conduct, with the most perfect model, in the Scriptures, with the most prevalent motives of a holy life. Consider the Gospel, in fine, as a system of consolation amid the ills of life, and still it may justly be denominated Christianity, because it uniformly directs us to the "grace that is in Jesus Christ," raises our thoughts to his celestial intercession and authority, invites us to contemplate him as seated on the throne of the universe, presiding over the whole administration of government in the kingdom of God, controuling every event, dispensing every blessing, opening and ascertaining the brightest prospects of eternal glory.

Vast range of most sublime and useful information.

But our holy religion, considered in a large sense, is the religion of the Scriptures; and while every part of her intimations leads to the most interesting of all discoveries, the mediation of Jesus, she does not confine her instructions to this subject. Accompanied and attested by very many evidences of inspiration, internal and external, the Bible blesses mankind with a greater portion of important information

than ever was otherwise communicated to the world. Opening the counsels of heaven; delineating the character of God; explaining the origin of the universe; sketching the early history of man, of his primitive innocence and subsequent apostacy and corruption; ascertaining the introduction of moral evil, misery, and death; detailing the history and the institutions of that singular people, who were, for ages, the sole depositaries of the knowledge of the true God; supplying us with the varied materials and models of acceptable worship; establishing our faith in the future, by recording many illustrious predictions concerning the past, which have been exactly fulfilled; narrating the wonderful life and death, resurrection and ascension, of Jesus Christ; giving us, especially in his admirable discourses, a perfect code of morality sublimely illustrated and happily enforced; suggesting the means of propagating his Gospel, together with the form of government assigned to the evangelical church; illustrating the nature, spirit, design, and influences, of his high mediation; opening our view into remote futurity; announcing the consummation of all things; introducing us into eternity,—what a mighty accession does the sacred volume bring to the knowledge of the human race! Who, considering these things, is not prepared to join

in the soliloquy of a noble and celebrated personage *, and, laying his hand on the Bible, to exclaim, "Here is true philosophy. This is the wisdom that speaks to the heart. A bad life is the only grand objection to this book!" Who is not disposed to adopt the encomium of a great eastern luminary? "The collection of tracts, which, from their excellence, we call Scriptures, contain, independant of a divine origin, more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains both of poetry and of eloquence, than can be collected within the same compass from all other books that were ever composed in any age or in any idiom †."

Ritual.

Incomparable in her intellectual information, Christianity, as an institute of worship, is also unrivalled. Her ritual is the most simple and spiritual that was ever inculcated by any authority. Her forms of devotion are few and inexpensive; such as all may observe, and natural religion might sanction. Her chief ordinances are venerably plain, and sublimely significant. Recalling mankind from an excessive regard to elegance of exterior in the rites of worship, she fixes their attention on the sentiments of the mind, on the state and

* Earl of Rochester. † Sir William Jones.

frame of the heart. Raising them above the degrading slavery of sense, she teaches them to aspire after converse with heaven and with God. Rescuing them from low and mercenary views of obedience, she invites them to serve the Father of all and the God of salvation, from a principle of faith in his high discoveries, from a sense of gratitude for the inestimable gift of his Son, from confidence in his character, and from love to him on account of his excellence and his liberality.

Far from injuring morality, or overlooking its interests, the Gospel has incorporated with her system, and enforced by considerations the most sublime and the most affecting, a code of duty the most pure, the most generous, in every respect the most admirable, that ever was given to the world. Here religion is not divorced from righteousness. On the contrary, all her ordinances are calculated to inspire, to cherish, to excite, a love of practical goodness in all its forms. A high and faultless example, which even unbelievers have been compelled to admire and recommend, illustrates her precepts, and gives life and the most engaging beauty to the dead letter of the law.

Influence on holiness.

Such is the frailty of our nature, that there is nothing which mankind feel so much in the hour of trial, as their

Agency of the Holy Spirit.

absolute dependence upon divine aid. All religions, accordingly, have supposed the inspiration and agency of celestial beings; but it was reserved for revelation and Christianity, not only to confirm this assumption, but to give the conception transcendent dignity and interest, by assigning this important work to the third Person of Godhead, by connecting it with the plan of redemption, and by applying it to the consolation of good men under all the varied services and sufferings of life. The spirit of God is represented as dwelling in the saints; so that, by a sublime figure, their bodies become his temple. He perfects the work of God within them. He supports them under all the pressures of the present existence. He leads them to the land of uprightness.

View of future state of being.

And these intimations which the Gospel gives of a future existence, are incomparably superior, in evidence and in elevated interest, to those of Pagan superstition in any of its forms. How pure and sublime that heaven which Christianity reveals, and after which the saint is taught to aspire! There, according to the delineation of the Scriptures, around the throne of the Eternal, in the regions of immortality, are assembled all good and great beings. There are no sensualities, no frivolities, such as the Hindoo heaven or Ma-

hometan paradise presents. There all is great, and pure, and high. It is the seat of perfect intelligence, of perfect rectitude, of perfect enjoyment, of perfect friendship, of perpetual praise. It is such as reason approves, as a saint may desire, and as God himself may enjoy. And the hell of the Scriptures is exactly such as is best calculated to deter from vice, to inspire an abhorrence of sin, to give a suitable sanction to the prescriptions of the law, to promote the interests of the holy empire of God, to magnify his grace, and to confer a solemn grandeur upon the scheme of redemption. It is in unison with the other parts of the economy of heaven. It exhibits an admirable, though an awful consistence. It bears the same character of magnificent design, impressive majesty, and boundless prospect.

Liberality of her spirit.

And as the system of Christianity is thus most elevated and interesting in her references, as she carries her views and consequences into an eternal state; so she extends her regards to all mankind, and would proselyte the world "to the obedience of the faith." Far from the selfish and exclusive spirit of the superstition of Brahma, the religion of Jesus is the religion of the whole human race. Her provisions and promises respect them all. She seeks to embrace them all. She is desirous of numbering the inhabitants of

all lands among her disciples; of adding them all without distinction to the "nations of them that are saved."

Reasonable-ness of her claims.

Obviously divine in her doctrines and prescriptions, in her references and spirit, Christianity is not less disinterested and dignified in her claims. For herself, she asks nothing but a fair opportunity of promulgating her tenets; for her ministers, no splendid emoluments, no worldly pomp or power, only that they may enjoy that protection in the exercise of their holy vocation to which they are so justly entitled, and that respectable support which befits their station in society, and by which, exempted from the cares of worldly pursuits, they may be enabled to devote themselves entirely to the service of God and of man.

Importance of our object.

The above sketch of the excellencies of Christianity, though rapid and imperfect, may perhaps be sufficient to shew its incalculable superiority to all other religions; and to convince us, both that, next to his own Son, it is the most precious boon that the Father of lights and of mercies has bestowed on erring mankind, and that its introduction into any Pagan country may be justly regarded as the happiest era, as the most benign revolution in its history.

Question respecting the necessity of civilisation.

Concerning the period when this may be attempted with the prospect of success, a controversy has of late years arisen. Some have contended, that civilisation is indispensably necessary to the propagation of Christianity: others conceive, that it is not at all requisite. This dispute, like many others, it would seem may be superseded by a distinction. The want of refinement is not an insuperable obstacle, for the Gospel has been addressed, with success, to wandering and rude tribes of those we call savages; and it is accommodated, in its admirable doctrines and consolations, laws and ordinances, to all classes of mankind, to the Jew and to the Greek, to the Barbarian and to the Scythian, as well as to the member of polished society. Yet, who that reflects for a moment will deny, that civilisation affords many facilities for the execution of this holy enterprise?—that tribes, which are scattered abroad over a wild and extensive track, and accustomed perpetually to rove, are not easily assembled for the celebration of divine service?—that, to those who have made no progress in the arts and sciences, many of the allusions used in scripture must be unintelligible?—that their language, scanty in terms, and low in its range of ideas, must want expressions corresponding to the sublime and various truths of Christianity?—

and that a missionary, who has been educated in a refined state of society, will find it extremely difficult to bring down his thoughts and terms to the degraded level of their understanding and speech?

Application of the question to our object.

Something has already been advanced to shew, that the Hindoos are susceptible of farther progress in civilisation; but, unquestionably, they are already so far advanced in refinement, that the attempt to introduce the Gospel amongst them, need not, on that account, be postponed.

Obstructions.

However, other obstacles, of a formidable nature, oppose the execution of this benevolent project. The introduction of a new religion into any country, is a work extremely delicate, difficult, and hazardous; so that some, who, with rude and rash hand, endeavoured to pull down a fabric consecrated by the prejudices of a people, have not only perished themselves through their imprudence, but involved that dynasty to which they belonged in their ruin. The undertaking becomes exceedingly more hazardous, and its success more uncertain, when that system, which we would subvert, has been long venerated and upheld, not only by the prejudices of one generation, but by the habitudes, and attachments, and institutions, of ages. If the religion to be introduced, so far from according in its most essential intima-

tions and claims, with the established belief, wages avowed and direct hostilities with it, and proposes nothing else than the utter expulsion of its rival and predecessor, the danger and the difficulty will be exceedingly increased. But that these remarks apply to the case before us, and that those who would propagate and establish Christianity in Hindostan, will have to struggle with all these adverse circumstances, is too obvious to require illustration. Nor with these alone. A simple, spiritual, and holy religion, will have to contend with disadvantages peculiar to itself. To turn men from the devotion of the senses, to the piety of the mind and heart; from a ritual which is pompous and magnificent, to one, which, however venerable in the eye of enlightened reason, is yet unadorned and unostentatious; from a system which connives at human corruption, or even prescribes and indulges, as an act of piety, the gratification of forbidden propensities, to one which professedly wars with human lusts, in their most imposing and least perceptible operations, which prohibits the latent thought not less than the open act, the secret wish as well as the impure gratification, the unholy principle as much as the sinful practice,—this must appear an enterprise, which, if not impracticable, is incumbered with singular and complicated difficulties. Yet all

these must, in this instance, be anticipated and overcome. Other circumstances occur to oppose this desirable issue. Universal indifference to all religious peculiarities prevails in Hindostan. With them it is a favourite maxim, that all worship is alike to Deity; and that all classes of mankind, while they sincerely follow the observances of their religion, be it what it may, are equally acceptable in his sight. Now, is it to be expected, that men, actuated by such a persuasion, will listen with great eagerness to a Christian missionary propounding a new religion? Will they examine his claims with much interest? Will they forego much to embrace a system, which, while it is less indulgent, is not, in their opinion, more acceptable? Besides, howsoever simple and affecting be the grand facts whereon Christianity rests, they are connected with mysteries which it is impossible for ingenuity to explain, or reason fully to apprehend. Granting that these were to be expected in a religion which professes to come from God, and treats both of his nature and of the higher arrangements of his government; granting also, that nothing but discoveries beyond the ken of reason can justify the supernatural interposition of Deity in human affairs, or the standing miracle of a divine revelation; and granting, moreover, that the religion of Hindostan, like

every other false religion in any degree refined, has its mysteries; yet, after all, we must remember, that what is familiar, though not less unaccountable, is easily admitted, while what is only strange, not more inexplicable, will shock belief, especially when, besides all, it goes to subvert ancient and venerated institutions. Again, that abject submission to the dictates of an interested and embodied priesthood, to which the natives have long been trained, and these terrors of a sentence of excommunication, more dreadful than that of the ancient Jews, incessantly suspended over the heads of those who might presume to desert the established religion of the country, and embrace the new faith, must not be forgotten in estimating those impediments which obstruct the progress of the Gospel in Hindostan. Perhaps, too, the opinion which the natives have been led to form of the religion offered to their acceptance from the conduct of some of its professed adherents, may not have been correspondent to its excellence. For it is a remark, not less common than mournful, that the unbecoming lives of many Christians, suggest the principal objection to Christianity. "O great Sir, (is the simple expression of the feelings of some Hindoos addressed to a Christian missionary) though we thought that many nations had many kinds of shasters,

yet in the country of the English we thought there was no shaster at all; for, concerning sin and holiness, those that are here have no judgment at all. We have even thought, that they were not men, but a kind of other creatures, like devourers *." In fine, to be convinced that this is an "enterprise of some pith and moment," it may be proper to recollect, that all the authority and influence of their Mahometan masters, enforcing a religion suitable, in some of its capital tenets, to the voluptuous propensities of the Indians, were baffled. They who had easily overrun and subjugated Hindostan, found the inhabitants in this view alone invincible. They had power to exterminate; but they were unable to convert this mild but inflexible race of men.

Facilities.

But while, on the one hand, to possess ourselves with a just idea of the magnitude of the undertaking, to regulate our plans, and to prevent over-sanguine expectations which might induce despondency, we contemplate the obstacles which are to be surmounted; on the other, let us not overlook those circumstances that are promising. The condition and character of the natives may inspire hope. Having reached a state of considerable civilisation, no difficulties similar to

* Bapt. Mag.

these which the enterprising heralds of North America experienced in convening the rude and roaming savages of the New World, or to those which the patient and adventurous Moravians encountered, when they penetrated into the dreary and inhospitable regions of Labrador and Greenland, can occur to the propagators of Christianity in Hindostan. The climate is good, the country populous, the communication not difficult, and the Hindoos everywhere may be easily assembled. Their attention also may be obtained without much difficulty; nor will they fail to comprehend terms borrowed from the usages, labours, and feelings of civilised life. Of a mild and complacent cast of spirit, and, with all their veneration for the shasters, disposed to hear, even with patience, their authority controverted, and their statements exposed, a Christian missionary may be assured of civil treatment, and a fair audience from this interesting people. A comparison of the two religions, of Christianity and Braminism, will suggest other encouragements. There are certain correspondencies of facts and views, of which a judicious missionary may successfully avail himself. A striking resemblance to the Trinity of the Scriptures may be found in the pre-eminence of their three principal divinities, and the peculiar honours which they re-

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ceive. That there is nevertheless one Supreme Being, to whom they ascribe several of the attributes of Jehovah; that he is to be worshipped and served; that the soul is immortal; that we have all sinned; and that an atonement is necessary, are truths (we are told) believed by them all: and these are also the fundamental tenets of the Christian religion. The Hindoos are all predestinarians; and, while the missionary will avoid their dogma of fatalism, he may graft upon their views the doctrine of election, taught in the Scriptures, and lying at the foundation of the gospel scheme of redemption. There are also facts recorded in the narratives of their mythology, which, whether imagined by fancy, or conveyed by tradition, as is most probable, bear a wonderful resemblance to the accounts given in the Mosaic writings, concerning the leading events in the early history of our world, and of the human race. The Hindoos also celebrate occasionally, with much pomp, the incarnation of their god Vishnu. These circumstances afford openings, which a man of judgment will know how to improve to advantage, as Paul did that peculiarity in the ritual of the Athenians, from which he took occasion to preach unto them " the true God and eternal life." By recent accounts too, the subjects of the British empire in India, are disposed

to listen to the Gospel: a spirit of inquiry is said to be excited among them in some places; and they read with avidity, such religious tracts, or translations of the Scriptures, as are put into their hands. They are represented, besides, as attached but slightly to their idols, readily confessing the insufficiency of their shasters, and looking for a more perfect revelation. What happy omens are these! It might have been presumed, considering the long usurpation and ample emoluments of the Braminical priesthood, that they would have been seduced to idleness, carelessness, and vice: and, if this be the fact, and it be also true, as has been suggested, that the respectability and influence of the order are greatly on the decline; the chief obstacle to the propagation of Christianity in the East, is already, in a great measure, removed by the hand of Providence. But the Gospel seeks her counterpart in human nature itself; and, in her facts, her doctrines, and institutions, appeals to views and feelings that are universally prevalent. Her Jesus is represented, in ancient prophecy, as the "desire of all nations;" and a mediation such as his, is unquestionably the common *desideratum* of mankind. "A certain man, on the Malabar coast, had been directed, as a punishment for his sins, to make a journey of four hundred and eighty miles,

with spikes driven through his sandals. In one of these halts, which loss of blood and exhaustion of strength compelled him to take, he happened to hear a missionary preach from these words: 'The blood of Jesus, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin.' Struck with the grandeur and suitableness of the fact illustrated, the wayworn pilgrim threw off his blood-stained sandals, exclaiming, 'This is what I want,' and thenceforth became a disciple of the cross*." Thus Hindoos feel their need of a Saviour like others: and thus the doctrine of the Gospel approves itself, as equally suitable to the case of sinful man amongst all kindreds, tongues, and nations. In short, the dignity and power of the British government concurring in this enterprise, as far as may be consistent with the rights of conscience, and with the nature of Christ's spiritual and holy empire, would both insure protection to the missionaries, and incline the natives to give them a welcome reception and a candid hearing.

This last reference might suggest the consideration of the means to be employed in propagating the Gospel among this interesting and complacent tribe of men.

It may not be improper, however, first of all, to take a

* Bapt. Mag.

brief review of what has already been done toward the execution of this high project.

History of former attempts.

Most of the European powers, who have possessed any considerable settlements in the peninsula, have used some endeavours to proselyte the Hindoos to Christianity. The Portuguese, the Dutch, and the Danes, have all attempted, each in their own way, and agreeably to their own opinions, this desirable end. The success of the first of these nations, introducing a very corrupt and accommodating form of Christianity, can scarcely be supposed to have forwarded the main design. The ease with which the converts to Popery relapse again to heathenism, shews, that the alliance betwixt these two forms of religion is very intimate, while the Roman Catholic, like the Hindoo, is too often "washed only to fouler stains." With both, the same neglect of moral duties; the same veneration for images, for holy water, and frivolous rites; and the same discrimination of days, meats, &c. prevail. Yet even Popery, with all its evils, necessarily includes the diffusion of some of the great truths of revealed religion; and it is the opinion of a Protestant missionary in Bengal, "That even this corrupt Christianity may serve to prepare the way for some good to themselves (its professors) and to others." Although engrossed in com-

mercial speculations, the Dutch have not been altogether unmindful of the prosecution of higher interests; and, in Ceylon and their other settlements, they have had considerable success. Hindostan has derived still greater illumination from the Danes. They have made Tranquebar, not only an emporium of commerce, but a centre of missionary exertions; and, having pursued the benevolent enterprise with unostentatious but lively zeal, they have at length the satisfaction of learning, by recent accounts from India, that, although "the beginnings were small," and for a long time almost hopeless, yet "the latter end" promises great increase *. But Christianity perhaps owes more in India to the exertions of a religious body in this country, unconnected with any local interests, than to all those who have for ages possessed territories in that region. Some years ago, a medical gentleman of the society of Particular Baptists in England, who had been in India, conceived, and, upon his return, communicated to some religious friends, the generous design of attempting personally the conversion of the natives. A minister of the same persuasion, whose heart God had previously inclined to the same good work, soon

* Bapt. Mag.

came forward, and engaged to accompany him to this scene of precarious but honourable exertion. Introduced clandestinely into the country; viewed for some time with a jealous eye by our government there; even compelled by circumstances to take up their residence at first in the territory of another European power; after having set themselves assiduously to learn the language of the province, they began to address the natives, and by degrees excited some stir amongst them. At length, having erected a printing press, having translated and dispersed, from time to time, portions of the Scriptures, together with small evangelical tracts, they found the emotions of the public mind greatly increase. By their prudent and peaceful conduct, they have also obtained the countenance of the colonial government, and are now flattered with prospects of rapid success. Several of the natives, even of the Braminical order, have voluntarily renounced cast, and submitted to baptism: a church is formed, and gathering: a spirit of inquiry is roused: the plan of the mission is enlarging: the prospects of accelerated progress, in this glorious career, are opening.

Defects of former attempts, and

Such is the brief sketch of the history of former exertions for evangelising the natives of India, which it seemed expedient to premise. Carried on upon a small scale, by a few

persons, in distant parts of the country, with slender means, without concert, almost without plan, and in the last case without the countenance of the public authorities, the trial has never been fairly made, the enterprise has never been conducted with all those advantages which it might have possessed.

transition to the present project.

General preliminary consideration.

Let us impress our minds continually with the persuasion, that all the success is of God. The light, the impulse, the efficacy, must proceed from him. As he can bless the most feeble and unpromising attempts, so he can as easily frustrate schemes the best laid, exertions the most strenuous, and a combination of circumstances the most magnificent and favourable. " Paul may plant, (says the great missionary of the Gentiles) and Appollos water, but God alone giveth the increase. Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." The history of the first and most glorious era of the propagation of the Gospel among the Gentiles, amply illustrates and confirms the former part of the preceding position. In revolving the annals of that interesting period of ecclesiastical history, we contemplate a singular and sublime spectacle. A few despised Jews, without wealth and without worldly influence of any kind, too candid to use art, too simple and uninformed to

avail themselves of the powers of eloquence and philosophy, are seen going forth to convert the nations to a faith, new in its facts, mysterious in its doctrines, and decidedly hostile in its spirit to all the established superstitions. They went forth in the name of the Lord, and God went with them. He eminently blessed their labours. He was pleased, " by the foolishness of preaching," to save very many. For the reverse of this view, and the illustration of the other part of the position, we may advert to the history of latter times. In our days we have seen at least one splendid missionary undertaking* fail in its object, abandoned by its projectors, and disastrous in its consequences to those zealous but unfortunate men, by whom it was prosecuted, and who embarked in it with the most sanguine hopes of success. The Sovereign Ruler of all has seen meet to frown upon it.

Necessity of means.

But while we recollect that nothing can be done effectually without the blessing of heaven, let us also be admonished, that, since miracles have ceased, we must resort to ordinary means; and that, to found a reasonable hope of success, these means must be adapted, as exactly as human wisdom and power can, to the object we would attain.

* To the South Sea Islands.

Must be evangelical.

Christianity, in the dictates of the Saviour and his apostles, as well as in the example of the first ministers of the word, has prescribed the means of her own propagation; and it is indispensably necessary, that those which we employ be scriptural in their character, spirit, and relations. If the will of God be not consulted, we cannot reasonably expect the blessing of heaven: if his institutions be transgressed, we shall be in fact fighting against the Most High, while we may imagine that we are promoting his cause. Besides, as Christianity is a perfect whole, as each part of the system harmonises with every other, he who would propagate Christianity by methods different from those which she authorises, must necessarily misrepresent her economy to the world, and ultimately injure her interests.

Open a field for inquiry.

At the same time, it was impracticable to give all the details in this case; and, while we adhere with exactitude to the grand outlines of the plan, as far as they are prescribed and exemplified in the Gospel, in filling up these, not a little is necessarily left to Christian wisdom and prudence. The limits of the divine law must not be overstepped; but, within that holy circle, human discretion and holy ingenuity will find enough about which to exercise themselves.

When the Gospel began to be published, all the constituted authorities were adverse to the rising cause; and hitherto the world has seldom seen even Christian governments exerting themselves in their proper sphere, for the propagation of the religion of Jesus. Attempts made by the rulers of nations, particularly of conquered countries, to introduce and enforce a spurious form of Christianity, by all the terrors of despotic authority, and all the cruelties of unrelenting persecution, the world has indeed too frequently witnessed. But exertions, on their part, to introduce the religion of the cross, in its primitive simplicity, and by means according with its mild genius, is a spectacle almost as novel, as it is interesting and honourable. On this subject, then, as the precedents are rare, as the circumstance is extraordinary, so the speculation is difficult, and the conclusions, having seldom or never been subjected to the test of experience, must be regarded with less confidence.

The investigation in this case new and difficult.

Various circumstances render it extremely delicate and hazardous for civil governments to interfere at all in this matter. Christianity claims conviction, a free, unbiassed conviction in her disciples: but, when the authority and influence of the reigning powers are all avowedly and strenuously exerted in support of her cause, a temptation to dis-

Danger of political interference.

ingenuous compliance is held out, which, it may be feared, will prove too powerful for multitudes. Thus we shall, in many cases, have only specious hypocrites, when we wish real converts. Besides, religion, like genius, is too delicate a principle to be subjected, without injury, to the rude grasp of power. Faith, like love, cannot be created by any fiat, but that which is divine. Religion and faith are both the gifts of God, and claim to be free in their movements, as the light and the air of heaven. Here then, as in many other cases in which human legislators indiscreetly interfere, "*laissez nous faire*," is an admonition, which it would be wise in them more frequently to revolve. And, to combine the security and stability of government (especially in a conquered country) with liberty of conscience in the subject, particularly when any change in the established religion is attempted or in contemplation, must ever be a task of no small delicacy and difficulty.

Concurrence of the civil authorities.

Yet there are certain things which, it would seem, government may do in this case, without prejudice to the interests of religion, or the rights of conscience. She may extend her protection to the missionaries, point out certain local arrangements, suggest plans, and give her aid towards a systematic combination of their measures. She may so

frame her polity and instruct her servants, as, in various ways, indirectly to promote the grand design. She may supply funds for the undertaking, build the necessary houses, and guarantee, by the sanction of her authority, a competent support to the teachers of various classes. She may require a suitable pledge of fealty from them, and claim, that, according to the true spirit of our holy religion, "they lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty."

Systematic co-operation of the friends of the Gospel in Hindostan.

From unconnected and desultory efforts, however wise and vigorous, the same good effects cannot be expected, as from a methodised and extensive system of operation. To combine and arrange well the measures of this holy enterprise, and to render these commensurate to their object, must then appear of the first importance. With this view a common council of the friends of Christianity, a grand evangelical society, may be formed, which, while it would not exclude but invite the assistance of other societies abroad who are employed in the same general cause, might have the Indian missions under its particular superintendance. That this society should be numerous, is not necessary: and indeed it may be feared, that many eligible persons, resident in India, might not easily be found. Few will promise more cordial union, and will be sufficient to

watch over the execution of the plans. Let them be such as choose voluntarily to associate for this purpose, and contribute their counsels and labours gratis, that malevolence may not have cause to throw any imputation upon the liberality of their motives. Let them be men, whose characters will be a security, to government and the country, for the rectitude of their measures; and whose exemplary goodness may reflect lustre on the undertaking. Let them be united in sentiment and spirit,—in the faith, and hope, and practice, of the Gospel. Let them meet, if possible, in some central situation, and be intrusted (under a suitable responsibility) with the application of the funds devoted to this noble purpose. And let it be determined, that they shall regulate the religious concerns of the mission, uncontroulled by aught except the sacred prescriptions of the word of God, the enlightened dictates of their own minds, and the sense of that important duty they owe to God,—their country,—and the human race. Theirs be the glorious, but duly-limited task, not of encroaching upon the rights of conscience, not of interfering with powers strictly ecclesiastical, not of exercising civil authority; but of creating funds and watching over their expenditure; of arranging plans, of selecting proper persons, of suggesting to them

their stations and labours, of providing accommodations, of extending protection, of opening facilities for missionary exertion, &c. Above all, it is of the highest importance that this should appear to be a truly Christian association. In the character of the members, and in the apparent design of its formation, it must be essentially unlike to that missionary society (doubtless a satire upon the name) which is said to have been instituted not long ago by one, who, openly and unblushingly, has made religion more a matter of state trick than was almost ever done before; and which is represented as composed of the clerks of the different bureaus of government, alike ignorant (we may presume) of the doctrines of the Gospel, and inattentive to the duties of religion: acquainted not with the laws of Jesus, but with the details of a low and tortuous policy: the mean creatures of an infamous usurper, not the dignified servants, the upright vicegerents, of the God of heaven: their lives a scandal to the profession of Christianity, neither illustrative of her excellence, nor calculated to advance that noble cause in support of which they profess to be embodied.

Room for the exertions of all the friends of evangelical truth and holiness.

Liberal, though well principled, will be that association, whose character we have been delineating, whose powers we have been attempting to define. Far from them be the

spirit of a jealous and exclusive corporation,—of a selfish monopoly. The harvest is great, while the labourers must of necessity be comparatively few. Sufficiently ample is the sphere of action for every evangelical auxiliary; nor, if matters are judiciously arranged, can there be any hazard of their interfering with one another. The cause is common to all Christians; and the success of each, while it does not lessen the triumphs of another, will enhance the joy of all who are actuated by the temper and views of our benevolent religion. Nothing but prejudice the most illiberal, or an arrangement the most injudicious, can prevent this primary association from availing themselves of the labours of other societies or individuals, who, corresponding in their views of the religion of Jesus, may be already embarked, or may be disposed yet to engage, in this holy and benevolent enterprise. For cordial co-operation, as well as ultimate success, a coincidence of religious sentiment, feeling, and views, is necessary. The disputes betwixt the Jesuits on the one side, and the Dominicans and Franciscans on the other, occasioned the expulsion of both from China, after they had made considerable progress in proselyting the natives, and attained high favour with the court. And, for the security of the government, as well as the dignity of the mission,

persons whose characters, principles, and abilities, are not sufficiently accredited, ought to be accounted inadmissible. But, with these limitations, all who are "willing to give themselves to the Lord" in this field of honourable and useful activity, should be heartily welcomed. This Christian union will be productive of many obvious advantages. A certain holy emulation will thus be excited, and the different societies and labourers "will provoke one another to love and to good works." The expences, being shared by others, and drawn in part from foreign sources, will be lessened to the chief institution. Consistency of plan, harmony of operation, will thus be secured: and, while the attempt is carried on systematically and jointly, it is likely to prove more efficient, than if it had been conducted only by one society, or by several societies without any concurrence of views or correspondence of exertion. Already in Hindostan there are missionaries from the Society in England for propagating Christian knowledge, from the Association for the conversion of the Heathens more recently formed in the capital of the empire, from the Danes, and above all from the Particular Baptists, whose humble and unostentatious, but active and well-directed labours, seem to have occasioned a mighty sensation among the subjects of the British

empire in the North. Let none of these, who may prove himself, by his principles and conduct, worthy of the privilege, be excluded from the work, or forgotten in laying the scheme of the grand project, by which it may henceforth be conducted on a scale somewhat suitable to its own magnificence.

Translation and dispersion of the Scriptures.

By the exertions of the last of these classes of missionaries chiefly, an expedient of primary importance for diffusing the knowledge of Christianity has been provided, viz. the translation of the Scriptures into the language of the country. The Bible is the grand record of our holy religion, in the phraseology of Hindostan, the only divine shaster. To translate this faithfully into the languages of the natives, and disperse it through the provinces of the empire, seems a measure, which would naturally have suggested itself and been adopted, as the very first that ought to have been taken. It prepares the way for the preaching of the word; it is putting into the hands of the unenlightened that text book, the commentary upon which you are afterwards to illustrate by more particular instructions. A great character, of whom, whether Britain or India, literature or religion, were most indebted, it might be difficult to determine, after having filled a high station in the latter coun-

try for several years, and given great attention to the subject, has added the authority of his name to this suggestion. "The Hindoos," he says, "cannot be converted by the missionaries of the Catholic, or any other church; but the best, and only means, is to translate some portions of evangelical prophecy, with one of the Gospels; to print these, accompanied with a prefatory discourse, illustrative of the certainty of the facts contained in the latter, as well as of their accomplishment; to disperse these quietly among the natives that are best educated, and leave them to their influence, which, if not successful, would at least shew the strength of prejudice." This measure, though too long delayed, has at length been carried into effect. And the influence produced upon the Hindoos has exceeded the most sanguine expectation. By late accounts, an amazing spirit of religious inquiry has been excited in Bengal; thousands, notwithstanding the most artful, determined opposition on the part of the Bramins, eagerly snatch and peruse the small tracts or portions of Scripture which have been translated for their use, and many are coming, time after time, even from considerable distances, to solicit books, to inquire after the new religion, and to request visits from the missionaries. Thus the train of their labours has been somewhat changed.

Now the press, as one of them writes, is pouring out its thousands of missionaries. And these messengers of heaven possess many advantages. They easily find their way into the bosom of every family. They preach in silence. They deliver their message with divine authority. They repeat the same instruction again and again, according to the ability or inclination of the disciple. But, although not a little has been done to put this excellent mean of evangelising the heathen into operation, much more remains to be accomplished. The Scriptures are rendered as yet only into one or two dialects *, and dispersed through a small portion of the country. Translate them into the other languages of Hindostan, disperse them throughout the empire. The work is laborious, but the country itself will afford every facility for executing it, and many of our own countrymen can assist in the translation. Large funds will be required; but Providence, in the recent formation of a society for translating the Bible into foreign languages, seems to have been providing these by anticipation. And who can doubt that an association, of which Lord Teignmouth is the president, will extend a liberal aid to promote Christianity in that country, which he formerly illuminated by his professional

* Vide Note EE.

and scientific labours, and to whose interests he is still powerfully attached?

Aids to be derived from the institution of provincial seminaries.

To facilitate the distribution of the Scriptures thus translated into the languages of the country, and enable the Hindoos to understand them, it will be expedient to have schools erected, in convenient situations throughout the empire, similar to the parish schools in Scotland. How much of the illumination of the public mind in the northern part of the island, is owing to this simple but most important institution, every one is aware, and we have lately heard from high authority. Slenderly endowed as they are, at an expence scarcely deserving of consideration, they have raised high the national character, and contributed more than all other means put together, (if you except one) to the diffusion of religious knowledge. An attempt, exactly similar to that which we are recommending, has been made by a society instituted for promoting the knowledge of Christianity in the Highlands and Isles of Scotland, and with great success. Schools have been erected: teachers and catechists have been appointed: ambulatory preachers have been allotted to certain remote districts. What has been the consequence? Civilisation and Christianity have been diffused together. They have reached places formerly inaccessible

to either, or into which the last alone, and in a very imperfect form, had penetrated. Barbarism and ignorance have fled apace before their benign influence. Law, order, religion, now preside where their opposites once reigned. The remote Highlander, once "wild as the wind which wanders over his mountains," now submits to the restraints of social life: and he whose mind and heart were once strangers to the auspicious efficacy of the light of revelation, now feels the sacred, the reviving influence, and rejoices in the sublime and interesting discoveries of Christianity. Similar effects will, in all probability, arise from the adoption of the same expedient in Hindostan. In a country where the means of subsistence are so cheap, and the wages so low; where the natives are so numerous, so complacent in their manners, not destitute of an inquisitive spirit, and desirous of being fitted for entering into the service of the Company, it cannot be doubted, that, as these institutions would be supported at a trifling expence, so they would be resorted to by the Hindoos, and become the means of rapidly promoting their improvement, civil and religious. With a special view to the latter, the instructions therein given, might be adapted, in part at least, to convey a knowledge of the elementary principles of Christi-

anity. Let the Bible, or some evangelical treatise, or formula of catechetical instruction, be the manual of education, in the native tongue or in English; and let pupils be encouraged to attend, not only by the high views suggested by religion, and the ordinary gratifications attendant upon the acquisition of knowledge, but by the prospect of promotion, civil or literary. Accordingly, let those who excel be advanced to be teachers themselves, and secured, during their good behaviour, in a salary, which, while it cannot operate as a temptation to hypocrisy in assuming a religious profession, may yet be competent to their decent support.

Number and

To these preparatory arrangements another may be added. Besides stationary teachers, itinerant catechists and missionaries will be required. What number of the latter might be necessary cannot be easily determined; but it may be suspected, that, when it is presumed twelve or twenty would be sufficient to perambulate all Hindostan once or twice every year*, the computation is too low, especially considering the great extension of British territory by the late conquests. At present, the full complement of chaplains for the establishment of the East India Company is

* Bapt. Mag. vol. i. p. 329.

only nine: the actual number usually five or six. Three are stationed at the respective presidencies: the rest, scattered over a vast tract of country, enervated by the climate, discouraged by the forbidding aspect of an unyielding superstition, are seldom seen, scarcely ever deliver a sermon to the natives, and are not easily obtained to officiate at the usual solemnities of religion*. If the suggestion be true, that they are not always men of the most exemplary conduct, and too often tainted with sinful conformity to the spirit and manners of gay life, it will easily be perceived how inadequate and inefficient, not to say adverse, to the promotion of Christianity in India, such a system must prove. In general it may be remarked, that there will be no necessity for circumscribing the number of itinerant missionaries, as the sphere of their ministry can easily be contracted according to their increase, and the application of their labours more and more concentrated, until they become stationary in a particular charge. Of far more importance it must be to secure a conformity of principles, of spirit, of views, and of character, to their high trust, and sacred function. It is presumed, from the design itself, that none

* Tenn. Ind. Rec. vol. i. pp. 96, 97.

who do not believe and profess their resolution to teach "all things whatsoever Christ has commanded;"—that none who do not appear to possess a simplicity of heart to relish the words of "the truth as it is in Jesus," and give evidence, by a suitable deportment, that they have felt the power of the Gospel, and submit to the laws of Christianity from a cordial attachment to our holy religion, ought to be employed in this holy, evangelical enterprise. A lively and active spirit of vital religion, accompanied with a competent knowledge of evangelical truth;—a warm sensibility of soul to the best interests of mankind, especially to the state of the poor, perishing Hindoos;—knowledge of human nature and of the living world, or at least that natural acuteness which readily enters into character, and quickly suggests what is fit to be spoken and done, in every varied circumstance of human intercourse;—courage to brave danger, accompanied with prudence, which does not unnecessarily provoke trials;—that self-denial, which is satisfied with little, and is willing, perhaps has been trained in the school of adversity, to submit to the disposals of Providence;—that enterprise of spirit, which incites to action, united with that perseverance, which is not soon cooled or overcome;—and that lowliness of mind,

character of missionaries.

which inclines the person both to think meanly of his attainments, and to submit cheerfully to whatever is necessary for his information and improvement; in short, piety, missionary zeal, firmness, prudence, and docility, will appear desirable requisites*. To crown all, an evangelical missionary must resemble, as much as possible, the lowly and lovely Jesus, forming himself, in spirit and manners, upon this most illustrious Model, and copying, in his ministry, the heavenly instructions of the great Apostle and High-Priest of our profession.

Mode of instruction.

By what means he shall introduce and recommend himself and his message to the unenlightened and preoccupied natives, must be left, in a great measure, to casual occurrences and Christian discretion. That aptitude to teach, which can readily seize upon circumstances, and insinuate itself, unawares, into the subject and the hearts of the hearers, will be an invaluable talent. The formal, didactic mode of instruction seems altogether unsuitable: the colloquial and the Socratic are far better adapted, both to strike and to persuade. Never, however, must he forget the dignity of his Master, the purity of his doctrines and laws, the

* The above delineation was copied, amid the hurry of composition, from a circular Letter of the Glasgow Missionary Society; nor does it appear expedient or necessary now to alter it.

grand object of his mission. His directory, both for his personal conduct and public ministry, is given with much brevity, but with admirable precision, by the great apostle of the Gentiles: "Thou, O man of God, flee youthful lusts, but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them that call on the Lord, out of a pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of God must not strive, but be gentle to all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure may give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." Beautiful, also, is the portrait drawn by Cowper:

> There stands the messenger of truth, there stands
> The legate of the skies: his theme divine,
> His office sacred; his credentials clear.
> By him the violated law speaks out
> In thunders; and by him, in strains as sweet
> As angels use, the Gospel whispers peace.
> He stablishes the strong, restores the weak,
> Reclaims the wand'rer, binds the broken heart,
> And, arm'd himself in panoply complete,
> Of heav'nly temper, furnishes with arms,
> Bright as his own, and trains by every rule

Of holy discipline, to glorious war,
The sacramental host of God's elect.

Probable consequences, and final organisation of the Indian converts.

How far these arrangements and exertions for evangelising the inhabitants of Hither India may succeed, dependent as the result must be upon a variety of causes, over which human wisdom and power have no controul, and particularly upon the blessing of the Supreme Ruler of all, it becomes not us confidently to predict. But that, if steadily prosecuted, they will, in all probability, produce some happy influence, though perhaps more slowly than we are willing to anticipate, may be concluded from the ordinary course of events, and from the impression which seems already to have been made. When this effect shall have become considerable; when the great mass of the people shall have been detached from their present superstitions, and enlightened in the principles of the Christian faith; when the spirit of religious inquiry shall have become general, and a considerable body of the natives shall have embraced the new religion, then other measures may be adopted for carrying on and consummating the blessed work of this holy revolution. The rest of the seventh day may be enjoined by public authority, so that at length "the land may enjoy her Sabbaths." Either at the expence of government, or by

the voluntary contributions of the converts to Christianity, churches may be erected everywhere, according to a regular and approved plan, for the conveniency of social worship. The stated dispensation of public ordinances may be instituted; and the congregations of the faithful organised and affiliated upon the scriptural model *. Thus, as in primitive times, the whole body of the disciples of Jesus in India will, by degrees, assume the appearance of a grand, religious association; and the magnificence of the result will correspond to the benevolence of the project.

In the natural order of things, the diffusion of the light of the Gospel amongst the subjects of our own empire, ought to precede, as it will prepare the way for, any attempts to spread the knowledge of the truth among surrounding nations. Hindostan, once evangelised, would afford the model, and the means, of illumination to the East. It would assume a new station in the universe: it would acquire a new species of glory. Always interesting, it would now be surrounded with new and brighter attractions. Having produced, from age to age, a powerful influence upon the affairs of men, it would now give another and bet-

* Vide Note FF.

ter impulse to the fate of nations, and the destinies of the human race. Having enriched those who were so fortunate as to enjoy its commerce, by pouring profusely into their bosom the riches of the earth; it would turn, in its career of beneficence, to other objects, and bless those, who peradventure neither needed nor desired its worldly commodities, with incomparably higher benefits, "the precious things of the heavens."

And it must be confessed, that Hindostan possesses mighty advantages "for diffusing the light of the Christian religion throughout the Eastern World." Situated almost in the centre of Asia, and surrounded by populous empires, to which the access is easy; having alliances with several, and commercial connections with many; holding a commanding attitude amongst all; possessing considerable territories, and some trading stations, beyond the limits of Hindostan; the British government in the East would be wanting to God, to their country, and to the world, if they did not avail themselves of such facilities for spreading the "light of life" among those who are yet "sitting in the region of darkness and of the shadow of death." "How beautiful upon the mountains of Thibet would be the feet of them who," ascending from the plains of India, "should bring good tidings of

good, should publish salvation, and say" unto the outcast heathens, dwelling in their vicinity, the great "God," the Saviour, "reigneth!" "The wilderness and the solitary place would be glad for them, and the desert would rejoice and blossom as the rose, it would blossom abundantly and rejoice even with joy and with singing: the glory of Lebanon would be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they would see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God."

> And still it spreads! see 'Hindostan' send forth
> Her sons, to pour it on the farthest north:
> Fir'd with a zeal peculiar, they defy
> The rage and rigour of a polar sky,
> And plant, successfully, sweet Sharon's rose,
> On icy plains and on eternal snows.

Thus our government, in that part of the world, opening the path of "the day-spring from on high" to visit the benighted regions around, would realise the beautiful delineation of David still more exactly than the benign administration of one man could accomplish, and be "as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds, as the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after the rain."

There are several circumstances which may encourage us to undertake this most honourable enterprise. Among others, two merit particular notice. The character of the superstitions which prevail in many of the regions to the East, is uniform. Throughout the Burman empire, and Siam, the religion of Boodh, which is nearly allied to the religion of Brama, and the doctrine of transmigration, which is the capital tenet of Hindoo superstition, constitute the national faith and worship. The Malays are Mahometans. Now, both these forms of superstition are familiar to the English in the East, and the same education which would fit a person to be a missionary in Bengal, will prepare him for spreading the Gospel through these countries. Besides, the primary languages of the eastern parts of the globe are few, and several of them borrow much from the Shanscrit. By some only five are enumerated, the Hindostanee, Persian, Marrasdæ, Malay, and Chinese. The last but one is spoken extensively, and has been called, from its elegant and mellifluous idiom, the classical Latin and Italian of the East. It is the common tongue of the exterior India, Sumatra, Java, Borneo, Celebez, the Philippine Islands, &c. And the Persian is almost universally understood to the west. That the latter may be perfectly learned in India, where it

is generally spoken, cannot be doubted; and that the means of acquiring the language of a country so adjacent as Malacca, may also be obtained there, it should seem, may be fairly presumed. Hence a singular facility will arise to the undertaking. Missionaries may be fully prepared in Hindostan itself, by a perfect knowledge of the languages, the laws, and the customs, of the surrounding nations, for entering upon the various scenes of their labours.

Nor do our countrymen in India possess inconsiderable means for executing the grand design. Strangers will always judge of the excellence of any new system proposed to their approbation or adoption, by the influence which it shall appear to have upon its professed votaries. Let then the sailors, and other servants of the Company, be instructed to recommend, by their spirit and deportment amongst foreign nations, Christianity to the reception of those they may visit; and let some person, who knows how to write for them, compose a brief address, illustrating the importance of the object, and enforcing their duty in the most persuasive manner. In every ship's company there will usually be found, it is to be presumed, one or more who are at least seriously inclined: let such persons be intrusted with the dispersion of Bibles and evangelical tracts, previously trans-

lated into the languages of those countries at which they are to touch. To facilitate and insure this distribution, in trading with the inhabitants of foreign countries, let such good books, as often as possible, be given away in exchange; and where this cannot be done, let proper persons be selected, and if necessary, engaged to circulate them in the course of business, or to carry them on purpose into the interior, and give them away in the progress of their excursions. Let every factory, which the British may possess in foreign countries, become an evangelical depot; and a person be either appointed with this sole design, or those stationed there principally with another view, be invited by such considerations as may prove successful, to exert themselves in scattering abroad the "word of life" amongst the natives. By and by a chaplain might be attached to each considerable trading station, with orders to endeavour, by all means in his power, particularly by mingling and conversing with the inhabitants, and by making such journies into the country as circumstances will permit, to avail himself of the elementary information previously diffused by the written word, and to impress the natives with a sense of the truth of Christianity, and of the importance of salvation. Besides, itinerant preachers might be sent forth to take a

wider range of labour, and pervade the country in all directions. For such persons the British government will be able easily to procure passports and letters of protection, if not direct countenance, from the ruling powers of at least several of the countries of the East. And let all who go forth under such sanction be strictly enjoined not to intermeddle with affairs of government; not to entangle themselves even with mercantile transactions, when this might retard their progress, or throw suspicion upon the purity and dignity of their motives; not even rudely and unnecessarily to shock the prejudices of the natives. To facilitate the accomplishment of these purposes, and promote in general the grand design, it might be expedient to erect one or more missionary seminaries in Hindostan, where persons, who are destined for the good work, might be instructed in the language, laws, customs, superstition, &c. of that country, which may be allotted to each, as the scene of his future labours.

Where it might be expedient to begin such evangelical exertions, is an inquiry, which must depend for its decision upon a great variety of circumstances. In general, if other things be equal, that scene which is nearest the centre of movement, for obvious reasons, ought to be preferred. A

well-informed writer*, however, who seems to have taken great pains in investigating the point, and whose memoir is now before the public, has strenuously recommended China. How far his arguments, upon a fair comparison, shall appear conclusive, it is for others to determine. Unquestionably, while several adverse and unpromising circumstances will suggest themselves to all who are acquainted with the subject, it must be admitted, that the degree of previous illumination which the Chinese enjoy, the state of civilisation they have attained, the correspondence of their worship with the Hindoo superstition, the singular fact, that almost all the New Testament has already been translated into the language of that country, and is preserved in one of the public repositories of this island, and the assurance, that success there would open up an easy access to several of the surrounding countries,—all present strong incitements to comply with the wishes of the benevolent author, and commence the holy enterprise among that distant people, who, yielding to a very exceptionable form of our religion, had once almost assumed the dignified appellation of Christian.

May the writer of this Essay be permitted, without in-

* Moseley.

curring the charge of invidious arrogance, to suggest another scene of evangelical labours? Various concurring circumstances seem to him to point out the Burman empire as, in the case before us, perhaps not less eligible. It is nearer than China; and vicinity of situation affords many facilities. But this is not its only recommendation. This extensive kingdom* contains no fewer than eight thousand towns and villages. Though living under the same parallels, the Burmans, unlike to their lethargic neighbours the Hindoos, are active, ardent, and inquisitive. Their sacred language, denominated Palli, from which the letters in common use are derived by an easy process, is evidently only a form of the Shanscrit. What is singular, though not a scientific people, yet so widely diffused is a certain portion of learning, that almost every man can both read and write. In spirit and manners they are courteous, obliging, and kind to strangers. The established religion of the country, the worship of Boodh, is more closely allied to Braminism than any other superstition. The government is extremely tolerant, and the adherents of all other religions, provided they conduct

* The following considerations were suggested by the Narrative of Syme's Embassy to Ava: a work to which the public are indebted for almost all the information they possess about a powerful people, bordering upon our empire in the East.

themselves with discretion, are permitted to profess their own faith, and observe their own modes of worship, without molestation. Polygamy is prohibited, and, although concubines be allowed, yet, while residing in the house, all who come under this denomination, are compelled to serve her who alone is invested by law with the name and prerogatives of a wife. The month is divided into four weeks; and every seventh day is observed as a day of rest and of religious worship. The Gospels are already translated into the Malay language*, which it is to be presumed many of the Burmans understand. Their government has at present some loose alliance with ours; and a common Christianity, by forming a closer and stronger bond of friendship, would convert this powerful empire into an eastern barrier, and thus contribute greatly to strengthen and secure our interests in Hindostan. Commercial intercourse, some trading stations in the country, and the proposed settlement upon Prince of Wales' Island on the coast, would greatly facilitate the diffusion of the light of the Gospel throughout this country.

But, while these circumstances shew that Ava is an inviting scene of evangelical labour, whether they decide the question of preference, it is not for us to say. In-

* Bapt. Mag. vol. ii. 537.

deed, the decision is not, in our present inquiry at least, of immediate importance. Without determining where the foreign enterprise shall begin, means preparatory to the propagation of the Gospel, by the dispersion of the Scriptures, as soon as they could be translated into the languages of the surrounding countries, might be provided and put into operation in many of these countries, or in all of them at once. It is not necessary to confine our attention and exertions to one. The process may be going on in all at the same time, as fast as circumstances will permit.

But whether the attempt be partial or general, be carried on upon a small scale or a more magnificent plan, arguments and motives to stimulate the prosecution of the good work, cannot be wanting. They are also of a character correspondent to the undertaking itself;—interesting and sublime. *Humanity prompts.* If he who refuses to give food to him who is languishing for want, or extend succour to the perishing, be stigmatised as unworthy of the name of man, shall we withhold the bread of life, the means of redemption, from the fainting, perishing heathen, and claim to be compassionate? *Reason urges.* The illumination of the mind, the extension of the views of man, are the objects of revelation.

'Tis reason our great Master holds so dear;
'Tis reason's injured rights his wrath resents;
'Tis reason's voice obeyed his glories crown;
To give lost reason life he pour'd his own.
Believe, and shew the reason of a man;
Believe, and taste the pleasure of a God;
Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb.
On argument alone our faith is built.
Reason pursu'd is faith, and unpursued,
Where proof invites, 'tis reason then no more:
And such our proof, that, or our faith is right,
Or reason lies, and heav'n design'd it wrong.

Religion obtests. Shall we not promote that glorious cause for which Jesus bled and died;—that faith upon which our best hopes are built;—that Gospel which has blessed mankind from age to age with such inestimable benefits, even of a public and common nature;—and that redemption which fills and enraptures the heavens with its high and glorious results? *True glory calls.* "That which it is good to receive, it is glorious to give." No service which an individual may render to society can be more honourable than this. It is a labour of love, of all others the noblest. The promotion of this good work will be glorious also to our nation. Then only, when the enlargement of our empire, the increase of our wealth, the exercise of power, and the pursuit of glory, are made subservient to the extension of the kingdom, and triumphs, and glories of Jesus, shall we either dis-

cover the spirit of the Gospel, or deserve the honourable appellation of a truly Christian people.

Be these thy trophies, QUEEN OF MANY ISLES!
On these high heav'n shall shed indulgent smiles.
First by thy guardian voice to India led,
Shall truth divine her tearless victories spread;
Wide and more wide, the heaven-born light shall stream,
New realms from thee shall catch the blissful theme;
Unwonted warmth the softened savage feel,
Strange chiefs admire, and turbanned warriors kneel;
The prostrate East submit her jewelled pride,
And swarthy kings adore THE CRUCIFIED.—
Britain, thy voice can bid the dawn ascend,
On thee alone the eyes of Asia bend.
High arbitress! to thee her hopes are given;
Sole pledge of bliss, and delegate of heaven.
In thy dread mantle all her fates repose,
Or bright with blessings, or o'ercast with woes.
Oh! to thy godlike destiny arise!
Awake, and meet the purpose of the skies*!

Jehovah enjoins. Thus we shall co-operate with him in his most glorious designs. Thus we shall contribute to the accomplishment of many blissful prophecies and promises. Thus we shall promote the most magnificent revolution in the kingdom of God on earth, and prepare the way for the final triumph of religion and righteousness—for the ultimate aggrandisement of his moral empire in the universe.

* Vide Note GG.

How delightful the prospects which open upon the eye of faith in prophetic vision! Christianity prevails universally, and the consequences are most blissful. Our race assumes the lovely appearance of one vast, virtuous, peaceful family! Our world becomes the seat of one grand, triumphant, adoring assembly!—At length the scene mingles with the heavens, and, rising in brightness, is blended with the glories on high. The mystery of God on earth is finished. The times of the regeneration are fulfilled. The Son of God descends. The scene closes with divine grandeur. "And I heard the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Hallelujah! the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven: and I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and he shall be with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. Amen and amen."

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

Note A. Page 2.

The epithet "general" has been inserted, because the remark cannot be admitted without considerable exceptions, which will occur to the intelligent reader.

Note B. Page 6.

Perhaps a slight anachronism may be here suspected, since it may be doubted whether, when the act of incorporation was passed, the number of our subjects in the East was so great as is supposed in the text; but, viewing the whole subject complexly, it was thought unnecessary to be scrupulously precise in this particular.

Note C. Page 8.

It will be obvious, that the scope of the inquiry led the author to consider the truth of the allegation, only in so far as, in this view of the subject, related to the East Indies. And considering that credible accounts vary so much, that great reformations have been made, and a rigorous controul is exercised; to be impartial and just, it was necessary to strip declamatory invective of its colouring, and to distinguish betwixt the evils inseparably attendant upon warfare, or the abuses of unauthorised criminality, and the spirit of government, the sanctioned oppressions of the public body.

Note D. Page 13.

Montesquieu, though it may seem no friend to Christianity, could not withhold the following encomium upon her amiable spirit and benign tendency, which his penetrating mind enabled him to discover, and his candour would not permit him to suppress: "The Christian religion," says he,

"which ordains that men should love each other, would, without doubt, have every nation blessed with the best civil, the best political laws; because these, next to this religion, are the greatest benefit good men can give or receive. How admirable," adds he soon after, "that religion, which, while it seems only to have in view the felicity of the other life, constitutes the happiness of this!" *Sp. of Laws*, vol. i. b. 24.

Note E. Page 14.

The considerate reader will perceive, that the author is here adverting to the diffusion of Christianity, and comprehending in his view of those discussions which are most interesting and important to mankind, the knowledge, the belief, and the improvement, of divine revelation. Unless these had been included, he is well aware the position in the text would be inadmissible, as Christian theology is unquestionably, both in its matter and object, the sublimest of all sciences and studies.

Note F. Page 33.

"I knew," writes a Baptist missionary, "an instance of a man whose cast is gone, through a woman in the family being obliged to live with a Mussulman, during the Mogul government, and though he has offered a lack of rupees (or L. 10,000 sterling) to have it restored, it cannot be done." *Bapt. Mag.* No. III. p. 235.

However, Verelst, in his "View of the English Government in Bengal," has stated, that it may be recovered, provided the delinquent's own cast, the Bramins, and the rulers, unite in soliciting the restoration. Hopeless concurrence! amounting to a prohibition; and, we may presume, never realised in one instance.

Note G. Page 34.

The amazing and invincible obstinacy with which even the lowest, and, in other respects, the most obliging of the Hindoos, resist every attempt to make them participate of the food of their masters, has been the theme of every writer on Indian manners;—and of the importance which they attach to smoking, and the forms and precautions they use in transferring the hooka or pipe, several amusing instances are given in the *Bapt. Mag.*

Note H. Page 35.

Tradition says, the division of the community into casts was instituted in the time of Mahabad, who is conjectured to have lived soon after the flood. The religion of Hindostan is also supposed to have been the first apostacy from the pure and primitive faith, established in *Iram*, the original residence of the family of Noah. JONES' *Works*.

Note I. Page 59.

The illustrious Bacon has inculcated this idea by the following allusion, which is happy, though quaintly expressed:

Quis novator, tempus imitatur
Quod novationes ita insinuat, ut sensus fallant.

Note K. Page 71.

To the general policy of such settlements, and to the benefits which might be derived from a judicious colonisation, the public mind hitherto seems not to have been sufficiently turned. Whoever would see the general subject discussed, may consult SMITH's *Wealth of Nations*, TALLEYRAND *Essai sur les Avantages à retirer de Colonies Nouvelles dans les Circonstances presentes*, and especially BROUGHAM's ingenious and original Work upon *Colonial Policy*.

With respect to the point under immediate consideration, the propriety of sending British colonists to the East Indies, the author is aware that this measure may be viewed as a dangerous expedient, and that the revolt of our colonies on the great western continent may be adduced in support of the objection. That the American revolution (if you except the enormous debt incurred by the war, the waste of lives, and the temporary prejudices engendered by it) has upon the whole been unfavourable to Britain, retaining as our countrymen on the other side the Atlantic do, a strong predilection for us, possessing, as we do, a decided commercial superiority, with a great rising commonwealth,—may perhaps be questioned. But, without entering into the argument, it may be sufficient for obviating the objection to remark, that the two cases are not parallel. The American settlers, driven abroad by persecution or by misfortune, felt their attachment to their native country diminished by the very causes of their emigration. On landing, they found a

wide waste, where they could cherish their love of liberty unmolested; where the scenery, by which they were surrounded, tended to cherish the ardour with which they were inspired; where the occupations upon which they entered, and the adversities they had to encounter, tended farther to form them to a bold and hardy cast of spirit; and where the character and attacks of those rude tribes, with whom they disputed the possession of the New World, concurred to inspire them with a certain intrepidity and energy of mind. Nor had the history of human affairs as yet contributed to impress mankind so deeply as it has since done, with an idea of the danger of revolutions, of the dreadful licentiousness into which an ill-regulated and unenlightened love of liberty may betray the body of a nation. But this salutary lesson has now been given to the world, written in characters of blood; and it may be presumed will serve in future to repress that spirit of wanton turbulence and lawless independence, which the inconsiderate have been apt to cherish under the notion of liberty. Besides, the colonists would go forth to India under the auspices of their country, and with all their patriotic attachments unimpaired. They would sit down at once in the fertile plains of Hindostan; and proceed to enjoy, without much exertion or molestation, the comforts of life. United to the British government there by many original associations, and by a new system of regulations, they would continually recognise this connection. Lost amidst an immense mass of native population, whose manners and religion would, at least for a time, be greatly unlike to their own, they might unite with the Hindoos in society, but they could not soon form very intimate relations, or enjoy confidential intercourse. Scattered in small groupes throughout a vast empire, they would find it impracticable to unite, so as to become formidable to the constituted authorities, or prosecute schemes of rebellion. Surrounded by those to whom they are comparatively strangers, and in whom they can hardly confide; exposed to the inroads of predatory troops, they will be urged by considerations of safety, as well as of inclination, to maintain their connection with the government of their country. Experience, too, may convince us, there is more reason to fear the settlers will contract that lethargic softness of temper, which both the climate and the character of the inhabitants are calculated to inspire, than that they will imbibe a daring and lawless spirit suited to such enterprises. Thus, while considerable benefits, as has been shewn,

may be expected to arise from a judicious colonisation, there seems little reason to dread those consequences, which it may be apprehended, on first consideration, would flow from the measure.

Note L. Page 76.

The writer is not here speaking of the fact, or what necessity may dictate during the noise and smoke of an engagement, but what a commander, were he left to his own choice, would prefer in the circumstances supposed, and what would be most likely to achieve the victory.

Note M. Page 101.

The words of this venerable civilian are these: " In the administration of justice, a severe burden is removed from our minds by the assistance of juries; and it is my ardent wish that the court had the same relief in civil, especially in commercial causes, for the decision of which there cannot be a nobler tribunal than a jury of experienced men, assisted by the learning of a judge."

Note N. Page 114.

Golam Hossein Khan, in his *Seir Mutakheren,* vol. i. p. 166. mentions, that one of the deputies of a viceroy of the Great Mogul had a haram of 500 women, which, after all, was not his principal establishment of that kind. Such being the licentiousness of an officer so inferior, to what excess must those of higher rank have carried these indulgences! Accordingly we are informed, that Acber, who was comparatively temperate and virtuous, and whose reign is denominated the annals of glory, had a seraglio of 5000. *Ayeen Acbery,* vol. i. p. 46.

Note O. Page 120.

It is to our island that Bacon applies the description of *Terra,—potens armis atque ubere glebæ.*

Note P. Page 120.

All the descriptions given of this useful class of men represent them as in a state the most abject. " The Ryots, or actual cultivators of the soil," says

Dr Tennant, " are still in the same state here (India) they were in among the ancient Romans, *adscripti glebæ*, a sort of appendage to the land, and sold along with it."

Note Q. Page 120.

The soils in Hindostan are very various, and the rich requires less labour than the poor, but the tithe of the latter is exacted according to its scanty increase. Indeed, from the circumstance of their not being strictly leased, the condition of the peasant is nearly the same, whatever be the produce of his labour: he is universally poor. His house, clothing, and implements of every kind, do not amount to the value of a pound sterling. TENN. vol. i. p. 95.

Note R. Page 128.

While the author was engaged in preparing the above hints, he was struck with agreeable surprise to learn from the public papers, that the subject having been taken up, at the suggestion of Lord Melville, by the Honourable East India Company, it had been resolved to form a dock, and a considerable establishment for building vessels, on Prince of Wales' Island.

Note S. Page 129.

A man who understands the manufacturing of glazed earthen ware would be very useful in this country. *Bapt. Acc.* No. IV. p. 321.

Note T. Page 129.

Bernier says, That although Hindoo lapidaries will cut stones which baffle the skill of European artists, yet the latter can superinduce a finer polish.

Note U. Page 129.

This metal is found in some of the northern districts, particularly about Agra, but is neither frequent nor plentiful.

Note X. Page 131.

Our own island affords an instance of extreme rapidity in the progress of such arts; and any one, whose curiosity leads him to investigate the subject minutely, may consult with pleasure the comparative statements first published in the Edinburgh Courant, and afterwards inserted in the collection entitled *Fugitive Pieces*, pp. 63, &c. and 103, &c.

Note Y. Page 131.

It has been suggested by a late traveller in India, that as all the hosiery is still knitted in Bengal, the introduction of the stocking-frames might be of great service.

Note Z. Page 132.

There is some reason to presume, that the finer muslins were formerly manufactured in India. Tavernier says, that when Ali Beg, the ambassador from Persia, returned from Hindostan, he presented his master with a cocoa nut, set with pearls, inclosing a turban of muslin 60 cubits long, and so fine, that the cloth could scarcely be felt by the hand.

Note AA. Page 141.

Any one who wishes to form an idea of the extent to which this traffic is carried, and the loss sustained by the India proprietors and the country, may consult the discussions on the question respecting the house of David Scott and Co. published in the *Annual Asiatic Register for A. D.* 1800.

Note BB. Page 148.

Scilicet ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes
Emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros.

Note CC. Page 157.

But let us not carry the matter too far. The cause of Christianity can never be ultimately promoted by the indiscreet zeal of ignorance or of error. It has been customary to assert, that the sages of the heathen world, ancient and modern, were altogether ignorant of these two sublime rules of morality, promulgated i the Gospel, " Whatsoever ye would that men should do to

you, that do ye also to them," and "recompense to no man evil for evil, but overcome evil with good;" and the assertion is almost universally true. But it ought not to be hazarded without limitation. As a great eastern authority remarks, the first rule is employed in the speech of Lysias, expressed in distinct phrases by Thales and Pittacus, and delivered by Confucius, the celebrated Chinese philosopher; and, while he tenders a prudent caution to Christian missionaries in India to beware of asserting what every learned native will be able at once to disprove, he produces some beautiful illustrations of the second, drawn from the Hindoo and Mahometan writings. "The duty of a good man, even in the moment of destruction, consists not only in forgiving, but in a desire of benefiting, his destroyer; *as the sandal-tree sheds perfume on the axe which fells it.*" Arya Couplet.

> Learn from yon orient shell to love thy foe,
> And strew with pearls the hand that gives thee woe:
> Free, like yon rock, from base vindictive pride,
> Emblaze with gems the wrist that rends thy side.
> Mark where yon tree rewards the stony shower,
> With fruit nectarious, or the balmy flower.
> All nature calls aloud, Shall man do less
> Than heal the smiter, and the railer bless!
>
> HAFIZ.

The truth seems to be, that the deficiency in prescription was almost always great and mournful; and that even where the rule did exist, it was an incidental suggestion, rather than an authoritative precept; was seldom brought into the view of the common people; was not enforced by a divine sanction, or by motives sufficiently powerful to influence the conduct. The same is the case at this day. Braminical or Chinese morality forms no exception.

Note DD. Page 166.

Brahma is represented as the patron of thieves: Vishnu is said to have seduced 16,000 virgins: and Seeb, upon seeing a beautiful damsel, offered to abandon his wives, his family, and all his holiness, for her. *Bapt. Mag.*

Note EE. Page 210.

The author is speaking of those versions of the Scriptures which are already dispersed, or about to be put into circulation. The Baptist missionaries having some time ago printed the Scriptures in the Bengalee, are now preparing a translation into the Hindostanee, a dialect which is more generally spoken. Farther information on this interesting subject has been lately communicated to the public. From the first Number of the *Report of the Foreign and British Bible Society*, we learn, that they are in possession of a version in the Malabar language, communicated by the Christian benevolence of Grandville Sharpe, Esq.; and that translations into the Tamulic, Hindostanee, and Malay tongues, compose part of the library of the Elector of Wirtemberg, to which, it is presumable, the society may have access. Such discoveries are extremely opportune, and the facilities which they afford of conveying the glad tidings of salvation to the tribes on the great Indian peninsula, we may venture to hope will be speedily improved. A committee of the above society has been appointed to correspond on the subject with some of the most intelligent persons in Hindostan. The generosity of the public in supporting the expences of the Baptist publication, has already been honourably approved. Let piety wisdom and zeal co-operate in prosecuting the grand object; and means will not be wanting.

Note FF. Page 219.

The author is not ashamed to avow himself a presbyterian; and he conceives, that much might be said to recommend the system he has espoused to the adoption of Christians; and he must wish to see it prevail. At the same time he respects the convictions of others—the institution of church-government, though very important in itself, must, in the arrangements for establishing Christianity in any country, be subsequent (as is supposed in the text) to the dispensation of the Gospel there,—and, while it is the duty of the ministers of the Word to teach and to inculcate authoritatively all the doctrines and all the laws of Jesus Christ, while it is incumbent upon all to co-operate in framing the church upon the evangelical model, it is also the privilege of the people, and in the case before us, of the converts to Christianity, to select (under a high responsibility to their great Master) that

form of church order which shall appear to them most agreeable to the Scriptures.

Note GG. Page 231.

The above lines are extracted from Grant's prize poem, and appeared so beautiful and appropriate, that the author could not deny himself the pleasure, which the printing of the Essay offered him, of inserting them here.

FINIS.

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